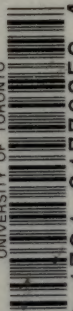
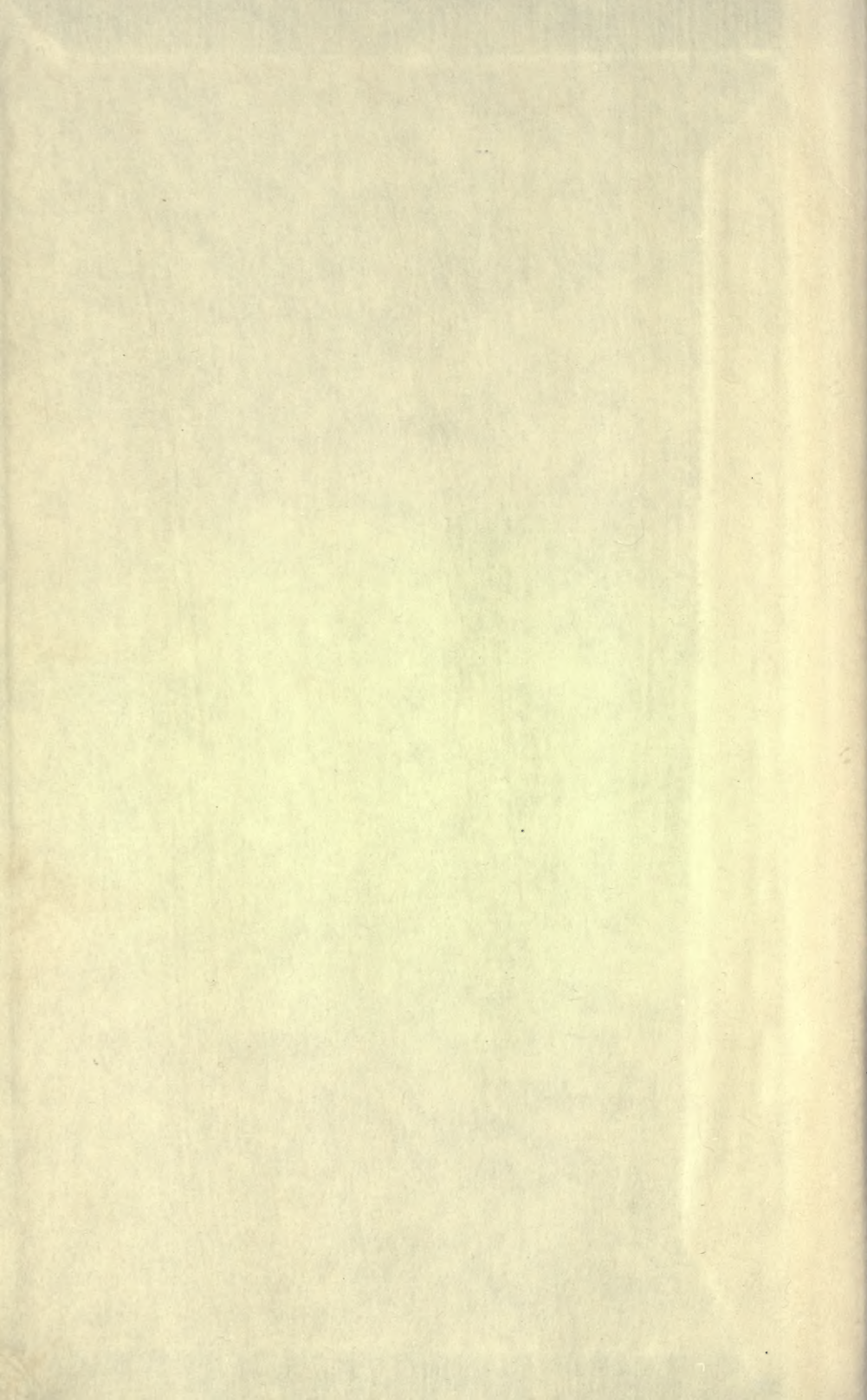


UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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# The Influence of Statius upon Chaucer

BY

BOYD ASHBY WISE

773

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF UNIVERSITY STUDIES OF THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY  
IN CONFORMITY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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For out of olde felde, as men seith  
Cometh al this newe corn fro yeer to yere;  
And out of olde bokes, in good feith,  
Cometh al this newe science that men lere.

*Parl. 22.*





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# THE INFLUENCE OF STATIUS UPON CHAUCER.

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## INTRODUCTION.

Since the time of Tyrwhitt, it has been well known that Chaucer was acquainted with the *Thebaid* at first hand; and since then various scholars have pointed out many passages in Chaucer that are due to Statius. But these borrowings were in most cases indicated by Chaucer's references to *Stace* or to some character who is prominent in the Theban story. This investigation was begun with a view to determining whether there were not still other borrowings to which Chaucer had given no clue. It seemed best, for the sake of completeness, to extend the study to the *Achilleis* and *Silvae*. It is true the textual tradition of the latter, as known to us, precludes the possibility of Chaucer's having seen it. However, had a close parallel between Chaucer and the *Silvae* been detected, it would have been evidence that this work was known in the 14th century.

Two well known forms of the Theban legend in the Middle Ages have also been considered, viz. Boccaccio's *Teseide* and the Old French anonymous *Roman de Thèbes*. It will thus be seen that my object was to determine the full extent of the influence of Statius upon Chaucer, by indicating not only what is due directly to the *Thebaid*, but also what comes from it indirectly through these two romantic intermediary forms of the legend.

I do not doubt that some resemblances in thought and phrase have eluded my search, for influence is a subtle thing when the author influenced is a great, original genius, able to improve upon models and sources, or at any rate able to give all material the stamp of his own mint. On the other hand, deeming it

well to err rather on the side of fullness of treatment, I have pointed out some interesting parallels, the relation of which as borrowing and source I should not care to defend. Chaucer's indebtedness to Statius is especially difficult to trace; for mythological allusions, of which Chaucer is so fond, can not in many cases be said to be due to Statius rather than to some other Latin poet whom he knew just as familiarly. For instance, not a few of Chaucer's allusions which lack the telling phrase that points to the original, might have been taken equally well from Statius, Ovid, or Virgil. In these cases, I have thought it worth while to quote parallels from other Latin authors than Statius, though such quotation has for the most part been confined to authors that Chaucer is known to have used. In fact, this latent indebtedness is difficult to trace because it results from Chaucer's wide reading and thorough assimilation of what he read; consequently his mind was so well stored with classic lore that methods of treating a theme, or apt illustrations of it, readily suggested themselves even when he had no text before him.

In treating Statius' indirect influence through the medium of Boccaccio, I have of course scrupulously excluded Chaucer's borrowings from those portions of the *Teseide* which can not be definitely paralleled by quotations from the *Thebaid*. Similarly, those portions of the *Troilus* which have their source in the *Pilostrato* have been passed over in the search for Statian parallels.

Constans <sup>1</sup> and Hamilton <sup>2</sup> have established a probability that Chaucer knew some form of the *Roman de Thèbes*, which thus becomes a channel of Statius' influence. This probability has been strengthened by my study, though not to such an extent as to amount to certainty. The relation of the *Roman* to Statius has been a mooted question, opinion inclining to the view that the enormous amount of invention based on the *Thebaid*

<sup>1</sup> *Roman de Thèbes* (II, p. elix).

<sup>2</sup> *Chaucer's Indebtedness to Guido* (p. 92, n. 2).



was not original with the anonymous old French author. Though I should not insist that the author of the *Thèbes* made direct use of the *Thebaid*, still I have been able to point out a few parallels significant of a closer relation than has heretofore been supposed to exist. Completeness in this particular was not intended, and is not claimed. I may devote a later study to this subject.

In presenting the results of my study I have tried to draw the line between direct and indirect influence; and have taken up Chaucer's works under these two headings in the following order: *Troilus and Criseyde*, *House of Fame*, *Legend of Good Women*, *Minor Poems*, *Canterbury Tales*.<sup>1</sup>

My obligations are many. I owe most to Professor Kirby Flower Smith, the director of my course of study; for he not only suggested the subject of my dissertation, but guided me and encouraged me in my work. Professor James W. Bright, who taught me to appreciate Chaucer, has also offered many fruitful suggestions. I am heavily indebted to Professor W. W. Skeat, whose peerless edition of Chaucer made it possible for me to undertake my task. I quote his text, and have received valuable suggestions from his notes and introductions. Other aids that have proved invaluable are: Henry Ward's marginal notes to the *Six-Text Print* of the *Canterbury Tales*, and W. M. Rossetti's comparison of the *Troilus* with the *Filostrato*.

<sup>1</sup> This convenient order has been set up by Skeat (II, p. xxviii) in exhibiting the results of Stewart's comparison of Boethius with Chaucer.

## I. DIRECT INFLUENCE OF THE THEBAID.

*Troilus and Criseyde*: Book I.

Tyrwhitt<sup>1</sup> was the first to point out that Chaucer borrowed his *Troilus* from the *Filostrato* of Boccaccio; but it remained for W. M. Rossetti to determine the precise extent of Chaucer's obligation. His line-for-line comparison of the two poems<sup>2</sup> shows that somewhat less than one-third of the *Troilus* is due to Boccaccio.<sup>3</sup> With the exception of V. 932-37, all of Chaucer's patent references to the Theban story are in those portions of the *Troilus* that are not taken from the *Filostrato*. Consequently the extensive influence of Statius upon the *Troilus* is, in the main, direct.

Chaucer's invocation of Tisiphone instead of one of the Muses is peculiar, and may have been suggested by the *Thebaid* i. 58 ff. where Ædipus calls upon the queen of the furies to hear and answer his prayer entreating punishment of his insolent sons.

"Thesiphone, thou help me for tendyte  
Thise woful vers, that wepen as I wryte!

To thee clepe I thou goddesse of torment,  
Thou cruel Furie, sorwing ever in payne;  
Help me, that am the sorwful instrument  
That helpeth lovers, as I can to pleyne!

For wel sit it, the sothe for to seyne,  
A woful wight to han a drery fere,

And, to a sorwful tale, a sory chere (i. 6-14).

Cf. *Theb.* i. 58 "multumque mihi consueta vocari Adnue, Tisiphone, perversaque vota secunda." Ædipus says he can

<sup>1</sup> *Canterbury Tales*, I, pp. xli, 71, and v, p. 340.

<sup>2</sup> *Chauc. Soc.*, 1875, 1883.

<sup>3</sup> See his *Prefatory Remarks*, p. iii.

lay some claim to Tisiphone's aid; for she has been his companion and guide in his course of crime (Tu saltem debita vindex, l. 80). Tisiphone in answer to the prayer manages the course of Fate against the Theban kingdom. With "cruel Furie," cf. "crudelis diva," l. 88; "crudelis Erinyes" said of Tisiphone VIII, 686; cf. also VIII, 65-71. With "goddess of torment," cf. l. 85 "tartarei regina barathri"; l. 93 "*discedit inane vulgus et occursus dominae pavet.*"

Close in thought to l. 211: "O blinde world, O blinde entencioun!" is *Theb.* v. 718 "pro fors et caeca futuri mens hominum!"

Next to be considered is l. 393 ff., lines that are very important because they have to do with Chaucer's relation to his source. They have nevertheless always been misunderstood.

"And of his song nought only the sentence,  
As writ myn autour called Lollius  
But pleynly, save our tonges difference,  
I dar wel sayn, in al that Troilus  
Seyde in his song; lo! every word right thus  
As I shal seyn; and who-so list it here,  
Lo! next this vers, he may it finden here."

Much depends upon the correct interpretation of this stanza which introduces the *Cantus Troili*, a translation of Petrarch's 88th sonnet. The stanza may be paraphrased as follows: "I give not merely the theme of Troilus' song (as my author Lollius did); but I give the song verbatim. The only difference is that Troilus spoke one language, and I speak another." That this is the correct meaning is seen by referring the word "our" (l. 395) to the proper persons, viz. to the words *Troilus* and *I*. Thus interpreted the stanza supports the statement: "My author Lollius wrote only the theme of Troilus' song, not the words which I give *next this verse*" (i.e. next after l. 398). This statement is quite consistent with the mere mention of the song in the *Filostrato* (l. 37):

"E quindi lieto si diede a cantare."



If I have correctly interpreted the strophe, then there is no occasion for the following remark by Rossetti: "Some suspicion may arise that Chaucer supposed the *Filostrato* to be the work, not of Boccaccio, but of Petrarch."<sup>1</sup>

On the contrary, we are assured that Chaucer knew his author Lollius (Boccaccio) was not the author (Petrarch) of the *Cantus Troili*. Skeat, too, wrongly thinks Chaucer refers the song of Troilus to Lollius; see Vol. II, p. liii, where he says that Lollius in this passage "really means Petrarch." This mistaken idea, which results from wrongly referring *our* (l. 395) to *Lollius* and *I* has ranged through editions and monographs<sup>1</sup> from Tyrwhitt<sup>3</sup> to Hamilton.<sup>4</sup>

Professor Bright has accepted this interpretation which shows Chaucer to be consistent in his use of the name Lollius and has published<sup>5</sup> the correct explanation of the way in which Lollius synonymizes Boccaccio.

*Boccaccio* with its pejorative suffix means "ugly mouth;" and to one seeking to use a synonym would suggest that its possessor was a thick-tongued babbler careless about his articulation. The English words for characterizing such a person were *loll*, *lollard*, *loller*. By the addition of the classical suffix *-ius* to the radical syllable *loll*, Boccaccio would be rendered by an euphonious equivalent having the semblance of an author's name.

"I graunte wel that thou endurest wo  
As sharp as doth he Ticius in helle,  
Whos stomak foules teyren ever-mo  
That highte volturis, as bokes telle" (l. 785-88).

With these words of Pandarus to Troilus, cf. *Theb.* vi. 728 ff.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. viii.

<sup>2</sup> If the note of the *Globe Edition* (1898), p. 443, "*Lollius*, i. e. Boccaccio (see v. 1653). Why Chaucer always refers to Boccaccio as Lollius, is still a mystery," is an exception it is inconsistent with the note of the same edition (p. 576) where the view of Dr. Latham is recorded.

<sup>3</sup> *Canterbury Tales*, iv. 340.

<sup>4</sup> *Chaucer's Indebtedness to Guido*, pp. 3 and 145 f.

<sup>5</sup> *Mod. Lang. Assoc. Publicat.*, Dec. 1904, p. xxii.

descriptive of Capaneus when about to begin a boxing contest. "Hic quantum Tityos Stygiis consurgat ab arvis Si torvae patiuntur aves, tanta undique pandit Membrorum spatia et tantis ferus ossibus extat." Similarly, Capaneus when struck by Jove's thunderbolt, covers as much ground as Tityos (xii. 12):

"Quantus Apollineae temerator matris Averno  
Tenditur: ipsae horrent, se quando pectore ab alto  
Emergunt, volucres immensaque membra iacentis  
Spectant, dum miserae crescunt in pabula fibrae."

But the original of Chaucer's lines is Boeth. *De Cons. Philos.* Book III., Met. 12: "*Vultur*, dum satur est modis non trahit *Tityi iecur*" rendered thus in Chaucer's translation: "The fowl that highte voltor, that eteth the stomak or the giser of *Tityus*, is so fulfild of his song that it nil eten ne tyren no more."<sup>1</sup>

### *Troilus.* Book II.

Line 1 ff. Chaucer (following Dante, *Purg.*, i. 1) speaks of the progress of his work under the metaphor of a voyage. He has been sailing through the tempestuous matter of his book. Now "the wedder ginneth clere," and Tisiphone is no longer a suitable companion (cf. i. 13); so he invokes Clio to help him from this time forth (ii. 8). He needs to employ no other art than that of history; for he is adapting a Latin (*i. e.* Latino volgare) record.

"O lady myn, that called are Cleo,  
Thou be my speed fro this forth, and my muse,  
To ryme wel this book, till I have do;  
Me needeth here noon other art to use" (ii. 8-11).

Similarly Statius invokes Clio as his muse (i. 41): "Quem prius heroum, Clio, dabis?" Cf. x. 630: "Memor incipe

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix B in Hugh Fraser Stewart's *Boethius: an Essay.* Edinb. and London, 1891.

Clio *Saecula te quoniam penes et digesta vetustas.*" It seems not improbable that Chaucer's choice of both Tisiphone and Clio was determined by the *Thebaid*.

The metaphor of the voyage appears well elaborated in the *Filostrato* (ix. 3):

"Noi siam venuti al porto, il qual cercando  
Ora fra scogli ed or per mare aperto  
Con zefiro e con turbo navigando  
Andati siam, seguendo per l' incerto  
Pelago l' alta luce e l' venerando  
Segno di quella stella, che esperto  
Fa ogni mio pensiero al fin dovuto,  
E fe' poi che da me fu conosciuto."

Cf. the note to Anelida, l. 20, p. 74.

A very important passage now to be considered is II. 83-108. Early one May morning Pandarus went to Criseyde's palace to tell her that Troilus was in love with her, and to do all he could to advance his friend in his suit. Upon his arrival at his niece's palace, Pandarus found her with two other ladies in a paved parlour; "and they three

Herden a mayden reden hem the geste  
Of the Sege of Thebes, whyl hem leste.

Quod Pandarus, 'ma dame, god yow see  
With al your book and al the companye!'  
'Ey, uncle myn, welcome y-wis,' quod she  
And up she roos, and by the hond in hye  
She took him faste, and seyde, 'this night thrye,  
To goode mote it turne, of yow I mette!'  
And with that word she down on bench him sette.

'Ye nece, ye shal fare wel the bet,  
If god wole al this yeer,' quod Pandarus;  
'But I am sory that I have yow let  
To herknen of your book ye preysen thus;  
For goddes love, what seith it? tel it us.  
Is it of love? O, som good ye me lere!'  
'Uncle,' quod she, 'your maistresse is not here!'

With that they gonnen laughe, and tho she seyde,  
'This romaunce is of Thebes, that we rede;



And we han herd how that king Laius deyde  
Thurgh Edippus his sone, and al that dede;  
And here we stenten at these lettres rede,  
How the bisshop, as the book can telle,  
Amphiorax, fil thurgh the ground to helle.'

Quod Pandarus, 'al this knowe I my-selve,  
And al the assege of Thebes and the care;  
For her-of been ther maked bokes twelve.'

The "geste of the Sege of Thebes" which was being read to Criseyde is so specifically described that if this were Chaucer's only reference to the Theban legend, there could be no doubt that he had seen a MS. of Statius' *Thebaid*. The story was written in twelve books; and the closing lines of one of the books told how "Amphiorax" fell through the ground; for the red letters just after the description were the colophon of a book. Now the end of the seventh book of the *Thebaid* (ll. 794-823) describes the earthquake which cleft the ground and let Amphiaras in his war-chariot fall into the infernal regions. The death of the seer is again referred to *Troil.* v. 1500; cf. also *Anelida* 57, *C. T.*, D. 740.

In the passage quoted above, there are two slight indications that Chaucer had already seen the *Roman de Thèbes*. "This romaunce is of Thebes" (l. 100) may be the title of the O. F. poem applied to the Latin epic. Cf. *Thèbes*, *explicit* ms. P., "Li romans de Thebes," and *incipit* ms. B, "li roumans de Thebes."<sup>1</sup> Again, Amphiorax is called "bisshop" which may have been suggested by "evesque" (*Thèbes*, 5053); cf. "arcevesques" (4791). In fact *Amphiarax* is an O. F. spelling of Amphiaras and may be received as evidence that Chaucer had read the Theban story in that language.

It may be remarked in passing that Troilus, like the valiant Tydeus, chose Pallas as his special deity; cf. II. 425 and *Theb.* I. 704 ff.

"To deethe mote I smiten be with thonder" (II. 1145).

<sup>1</sup> Constans II, pp. x, xvii.

Pandarus here invites the fate of Capaneus; cf. v. 1504 f.

“And also how *Cappaneüs the proude*  
With thonder-dint was slayn, *that cryde loude.*”

Capaneus challenged Jove to battle in such insolent terms that the auctor fulminis deemed him worthy of a bolt, *Theb.* x. 902 ff.

### *Troilus.* Book III.

The first 38 lines of this proem (III. 1 ff.) are a close adaptation of Boccaccio's *Filostrato* (III. 74-79). In Boccaccio, the words are a speech of Troilus; Chaucer addresses them to Venus on his own account because he wishes to invoke her aid in describing Troilus' amorous bliss (l. 39 ff). To Venus alone was it given to brave the wrath of Mars (l. 22); cf. *Theb.* III. 295-99.

“Calliope, thy vois be now presente,  
For now is nede; sestow not my destresse,  
How I mot telle anon-right the gladnesse  
Of Troilus, to Venus herynge?” (III. 45-48).

Statius, too, invokes Calliope, *Theb.* 4, 34:—

“tuque, O nemoris regina sonori,  
Calliope, quas ille manus, quae moverit arma  
Gradivus, quantas populis solaverit urbes,  
Sublata molire lyra.” Cf. 8, 373 f.

The custom of the classical poets, which Chaucer has adopted in his *Troilus*, was to invoke the muses not only at the beginning of a work, but also in the body of it when they were confronted by a task of unusual difficulty (Quintil. iv. *Prooem.* 4).

*Natal Ioves* (III. 150). Skeat remarks: “The reason for the use of *natal* is not obvious.” He cites Hor. *Epist.* II. 2, 187. Jove is called *natal* because he is the source of gods,

men, and things. Cf. *C. T.*, A. 3035 f.; *Theb.* III. 488, "Summe sator terraeque divumque," I. 178, III. 219, 239, v. 22, VII. 155, 734, IX. 511, 835, XI. 248; Verg. *Aen.* I. 254; Lucan x. 266; particularly Valerius Soranus, quoted by Augustinus, *De Civ. Dei*, 7, 9:—

"Iupiter omnipotens, rerum, regumque, deumque  
Progenitor, genetrizque deum, deus unus et omnis."

Cf. also *Troil.* III. 1016: "But O, thou Iove, O auctor of nature"; and Ovid *M.* iv. 640 "auctor generis (Iuppiter)."

"O Iove eek, for the love of faire Europe,  
The which in form of bole away thou fette" (III. 722 f.).

Similarly Bacchus when pleading for his native city, makes Jove's love for Europa the basis of appeal, *Theb.* VII. 191:—

"Hic Tyrium genus et nostro felicior igne  
Taurus: Agenoreos saltem tutare nepotes."

Cf. XI. 210-14; and see the note to *L. of G. W.* 113, B. (p. 64).

"O Mars, thou with thy bloody cope" (III. 724); cf. *Theb.* III. 229 "tota perfusum pectora belli tempestate"; VII. 264, "Mavorte cruento"; VIII. 231. Verg. (*Aen.* 12, 332) and Ovid (*R. A.* 153) call the god *sanguineus*. Cf. "Mars the rede" *C. T.*, A. 1747, and *Anelida* I. "Marte rubicondo" (*Tes.* I. 3).

"O night, allas! why niltow over us hove,  
As longe as whanne Almena lay by Iove?" (III. 1428).

Cf. *Theb.* VI. 266: "Parvoque Alcmena superbit Hercule, *tergmina* crinem circumdata luna"; IX. 424 "vetitam currus deiungere Phoben"; XII. 300 "Certe Jovis improba (Cynthia) iussu *Ter noctem Herculeam*." Lactantius on XII. 301. "Iupiter cum Almenam Amphitryonis amasset uxorem et ad eam corrupendam demutatus in Amphitryonis venisset specie, ne adventu diei concubitus minueretur voluptas, iussit Iuppiter illam noc-



tem triplicem fieri, *qua triplices cursus Luna peregit*. Ex quo compressu Alcmenae Hercules dicitur natus. Merito ergo noctem Herculeam dixit, in qua conceptus est Hercules." Boccaccio (*Tes.* iv. 14):

"E quelle dove son d'Almena  
Che doppia notte volle a farsi piena?"

has probably misunderstood Stat. *Theb.* x. 76 "Non saevius arsit (Iuno) Herculeae cum matris onus geminosque Tonantis secubitus vacuis indignaretur in astris."

In his Tagelied, Troilus says: "O cruel day . . . envious day, what list thee so to spyen?" (*III.* 1450 ff.). Statius, describing the unsuccessful attempt of the armor-bearers of Tydeus and Parthenopaeus to recover the bodies of their kings, says they dared not to speak or weep; for "*prope saeva dies indexque minatur Ortus*" (*Theb.* x. 381).

"Thou hast in hevене y-brought my soule at reste  
Fro *Flegiton*, the fiery flood of helle" (*III.* 1599 f.).

Cf. *Theb.* iv. 523 "*Fumidus atra vadis Phlegethon incendia volvit*"; viii. 29 "*Adsistunt lacrimis atque igne tumentes Cocytus Phlegethonque*." Of course Chaucer's reference to the Phlegethon might have been taken from any one of a number of sources. Skeat quotes Verg. *Aen.* vi. 550 "*Quae rapidus flammis ambit torrentibus amnis Tartareus Phlegethon*."

### *Troilus.* Book IV.

"O ye Herines, Nightes doughtren three,  
That endelees compleynen ever in pyne,  
Megara, Alete, and eek Thesiphone" (*IV.* 22-24).

Now that Troilus suffers double sorrow from the loss of Cresseide, Chaucer invokes the aid of all the furies whereas he deemed Tisiphone sufficient in the first book. So Statius regards Tisiphone as inadequate to complete the work of fate

against the two brothers; and Megaera is summoned to help incite them to single combat. *Theb.* xi. 57 ff. Jocasta alludes to Œdipus' invocation of the furies thus: "Non ego te contra Stygiis feralia sanxi vota *deis*, caeco nec *Erinyas* ore rogavi." *Theb.* xi. 344 f. Cf. v. 66 "Tartareas . . . sorores"; iv. 53 "Stygias . . . Eumenidas," Ovid *H.* xi. 103; "Erinyes atrae"; *M.* viii. 481 "'*Poenarumque deae triplices, furialibus*' inquit '*Eumenides, sacris vultus advertite vestros.*'"

"Thou cruel Mars eek, fader to Quiryne" (iv. 25).

According to Carter (*Epitheta*), Mars is nowhere called *crudelis* by the Latin poets; Statius, however, terms him *saevus*, *Theb.* vii. 703. Cf. Ovid *M.* xv. 862 "*genitorque Quirine urbis, et invicti Gradive Quirini.*" Chaucer uses the Latin vocative for his form of the name Quirinus, which he probably took from Ovid.

"Right as the *wilde bole* biginneth springe  
Now here, now there, y-darted to the herte,  
And of his deeth roreth in compleyninge . . ." (iv. 239-41).

When Eteocles was sacrificing to Jove "*ferus ante ictum spumis delubra cruentat Taurus et obstantum mediis e coetibus exit Turbidus insanoque ferens altaria cornu*" (*Theb.* xi. 228-30). Chaucer's figure is taken from the *Filostrato* v. 23, where the bull is not sacrificial, but one running wild in the forest. Cf. Dante *Inf.* xii. 22 and Vergil *Aen.* ii. 223: *Qualis mugitus fugit cum saucius aram Taurus et incertam excussit cervice securim.*

"I, *combe-world*, that may of no-thing serve,  
But ever dye, and never fully sterve" (iv. 279 f.).

These lines may be reminiscent of the living death of Œdipus several times referred to by Statius (*Theb.* i. 48): "*Œdipodes longaque animam sub morte tenebat.*" Cf. iv. 614 "*Iacet ille in funere longo,*

*Quem fremis, et iunctae sentit confinia mortis,  
Obsitus exhaustos paedore et sanguine vultus*

- Eiectusque die: sors leto durior omni.”  
 XI. 580 “At genitor sceleris comperto fine profundis  
 Erupit tenebris, saevoque in limine profert  
 Mortem imperfectam.”
- XI. 696 “An refert, quo funera longa measque  
 Transportem tenebras? ne non gens cuncta precanti  
 Concedat, patriae quantum miser incubo terrae?”

A little later in his complaint Troilus again thinks of himself as a second Œdipus (iv. 299):—

“Ne never wil I seen it shyne or reyne;  
 But ende *I wil, as Edippe in derknesse*  
*My sorowful lyf, and dyen in distresse.*”

See the passages quoted above in which Œdipus’ self-inflicted blindness is termed *tenebrae*; cf. i. 46:

“Impia iam merita scrutatus limina dextra  
 Morserat aeterna damnatum nocte pudorem  
 Œdipodes longaue animam sub morte tenebat  
 Illum indulgentem tenebris imaeque recessu  
 Sedis inauspectos caelo radiisque penatis  
 Servantem tamen adsiduis circumvolat alis  
 Saeva dies animi.”

Cf. further i. 71, 236-41; vii. 469; xi. 105, 333, 345, 504, 585, 614, 620 f., 668, 674, 692 f.

Yet in the feld of pitee out of peyne,  
 That hight Elysos, shul we been y-fere (iv. 789 f.).

The phrase “out of peyne” might have been suggested by *securi Elysii* (*Theb.* viii. 14); and *pios* (iv. 481) may explain “field of pitee”: “tu separe coetu *Elysios*, Persei *pios* virgaque potenti nubilus Arcas agat, “the words of Tiresias imploring Hecate to conduct the Manes to the upper world. Statius in his apostrophe to Amphiaraus says (viii. 193):

“An tibi *felices lucos* miseratus Avernii  
 Rector et Elysias dedit inservare volucres?”



Cf. further *Theb.* III. 247, IV. 520, VIII. 775, XI. 64; *Val. Flac.* I. 649. However, in view of the following reference to Orpheus, Chaucer's form *Elysos* is best considered as due to Vergil *G.* I. 38, *Elysios campos*, as Skeat suggests. Cf. *Corp. Gloss.* v. 289, 14; Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, x. 30; XXI. 27, 25; Cassiod. *Variae* II. 40, 7; *Tibullus* I. 3, 58; Claudian, *De Cons. Stil.* II. 378; Dante, *Par.* xv. 25-7.

"So that his sowle her sowle folwen might,  
Ther-as the doom of Mynos wolde it dighte" (iv. 1187 f.).

When Pluto was contemplating a terrible punishment for Amphiaras because he did not enter his realm in the prescribed fashion, the seer said no blame attached to him and appealed to Minos who can discern the truth by means of his urn, and so determine the just estate of departed spirits (*Theb.* VIII. 102) "Scit iudicis urna Dictaei verumque potest defendere Minos." Cf. XI. 571 "Si modo Agenorei stat Gnosia iudicis urna Qua reges punire datur"; IV. 530 "Arbiter hos dura versat Cortynius urna Vera minis poscens adigitque expromere vitas Usque retro et tandem poenarum lucra fateri." Lewis refers to Verg. *Aen.* VI. 432 f., cf. *L. of G. W.* 1886 where the "iuge infernal" is confused with Minos II., father of Ariadne.

Criseyde's blasphemous utterances regarding Apollo and the Delphic oracle are similar to those of Capaneus, *superum contemptor* (IX. 550), who in turn, finds a prototype in Virgil's Mezentius (*Aen.* VII. 648 and VIII. 7). Criseyde is telling Troilus of her various schemes for keeping her promise to return to him, and says she will appeal to her father's *desyr of gold* by asking him to allow her to return to Troy and send him her personal property. If he objects to her return to a doomed city, she will convince him that the oracle foretelling the destruction of Troy was not worth *three hawes* and that gods are only an invention of man's fear.

IV. 1397 "For al Apollo, or his clerkish lawes  
Or calculating awayleth nought three hawes, . . .  
1401 And if he wold ought by his sort it preve

If that I lye, in certayn I shal fonde  
 Distorben him, and plukke him by the sleeve,  
 Making his sort, and beren him on honde,  
 He hath not wel the goddes understonde.  
*For goddes speken in amphibologies,*  
 And, for a sooth, they tellen twenty lyes.  
*Eek drede fond first goddes, I suppose,*  
 Thus shal I seyn, and that *his coward herte*  
*Made him amis the goddes texte to glose,*  
 Whan he for ferde out of his Delphos sterte."

As the *Filostrato* has no corresponding lines, this trait of Creseyde's character may have been suggested by Statius' portrayal of Capaneus. Cf. *Theb.* III. 611 "Non si ipse cavo sub vertice Cirrhae (*quisquis is est, timidis famaеque ita visus*) Apollo Mugiāt insano penitus seclusus in antro, Expectare queam, *dum pallida virgo tremendas Nuntiet ambages.* Virtus mihi numen et ensis Quem teneo! *Iamque hic timida cum fraude sacerdos Exeat, aut hodie, volucrum quae tanta potestas, Experiar.*" III. 648 "Tuus O furor auguret uni Ista tibi, ut servus vacuos inglorius annos Et tua non umquam Tyrrhenus tempora circum Clangor eat." III. 657 "*Tua prosus inani Verbo polo causas abstrusaque nomina rerum Eliciunt?* Miseret superum, si carmina curae Humanaeque preces! *Quid inertia pectora terres? Primus in orbe deos fecit timor!*" III. 666 "Procul haec tibi mollis infula terrificique aberit dementia Phoebi."

Skcat says lines 1401-14 are due to a passage in Guido; and in his *Introd.* (II. p. lvii), he quotes the passage from Book XIX: "Sane deceperunt te Apollinis *frivola responsa*, a quo dicis te suscepisse mandatum ut tu paternas Lares desereres, et tuos in tanta acerbitate Penates sic tuis specialiter hostibus adhereres. Sane non fuit ille deus Apollo, set, puto, fuit comitiva infernalium Furiarum a quibus responsa talia recepisti." The only expression that could have suggested Criseyde's irreverence is *frivola responsa*. There is no suggestion that the cowardice of Calchas caused him to misinterpret the oracle. Capaneus, however, charges Amphiaras with cowardice and dishonesty: "*Iamque hic timida cum fraude sacerdos*

exeat." Moreover, "Eek drede fond first goddes" is a translation of "primus in orbe deus fecit timor."<sup>1</sup> Chaucer has transferred to Calchas a weakness which in Statius is attributed to another seer of Apollo, and has made Criseyde a *contemptrix divum* after the model of Capaneus. In these lines, we have a good illustration of Chaucer's method of recasting the characters of his source by adding striking traits of similar characters described by some other author. Cf. *Theb.* x. 485, 847; and see Lounsbury (*Studies in Chaucer* II. 501) and Macaulay's note on Gower (*C. A.* I. 1980).

"Stix, the put of helle" (IV. 1540). The mediæval and particularly the Dantesque notion of hell has induced Chaucer to modify the classical conception. That this is the case is indicated by the gloss "Styx, puteus infernalis," which may

<sup>1</sup>"Primus in orbe deos fecit timor" is the poetic expression of what was probably a famous sententia of the rhetorical schools. In fact Petronius had previously written a poetical *suasoria* of 13 hexameters for which these words are the text. (Fragm. XXVII.):

"*primus in orbe deos fecit timor, ardua caelo  
fulmina cum caderent discussaque moenia flammis  
atque ictus flagraret Athos, mox Phoebus ad ortus  
lustrata devectus humo lunaeque senectus  
et reparatus honos, hinc signa effusa per orbem  
et permutatus disiunctis mensibus annus.  
profecit vitium iamque error iussit inanis  
agricolas primos Cereri dare messis honores,  
palmitibus plenis Bacchum vincere, Palemque  
pastorum gaudere manu. Natat obrutus omnis  
Neptunus demersus aqua, Pallasque tabernas  
vindicat. et voti reus et qui vendidit orbem,  
iam sibi quisque deos avido certamine fingit.*"

Lucretius too preaches on this text; cf. I. 151-4; V. 1161-68, 1218-40. Cf. further Fulgentius, *Mythologicon* I. 1. This rhetorical commonplace must have been turned to account by still other authors. A variant expression of the same opinion is Lucan's "quae finxere timent" (I. 486). Cf. Verg. *Aen.* VII. 59 "Laurus erat tecti medio in penetralibus altis Sacra comam, multosque metu servata per annos." Juvenal X. 365: "nullum numen habes si sit prudentia, nos te, nos facimus, Fortuna, deam caeloque locamus." See De la Ville de Mirmont in *Le Musée Belge*, 1904, p. 402.



have proceeded from Chaucer himself, in ms. Harl. 2392 (Skeat II. p. lxii). Cf. also *C. T.*, A. 1225 f.

"Now is me shape eternally to dwelle  
 Noght in purgatorie, but in helle;"  
 "The cave was also as derk  
 As helle pit over-al aboute" (*B. D.* 170);  
 "With Pluto king as depe been in helle  
 As Tantalus!" (*Troil.* III. 592); "swallow of helle"  
 (*L. of G. W.* 1104).

Dante, whom Chaucer regarded as an authority on the lower world (*H. F.* 450), represents the Styx as a marsh in the Fifth Circle of Inferno. Canto VII. 106 ff. is translated thus by Longfellow:

"A marsh it makes, which has the name of Styx,  
 This tristful brooklet, when it has descended  
 Down to the foot of the malign gray shores.  
 And I, who stood intent upon beholding,  
 Saw people mud-bespreynt in that lagoon."

Though Statius represents the Styx as a river (IV. 524), "*Styx discretis interflua manibus obstat*," yet certain passages seem to foreshadow the Dantesque notion. Mars promises Venus that he will be partial to Harmonia's descendants in conducting the war: "Rather than forget my relation to the Thebans, prius in patru deus infera mergar Stagna et pallentes agar exarmatus ad umbras" (III. 302). When the manes are summoned by Tiresias, Cadmus rises from a lake (IV. 553): "*Primus sanguineo submittit inertia Cadmus Ora lacu*." Capaneus cherished a distinguished shade on Stygian waters (XI. 70): "*Coetu Capaneus laudatur ab omni Ditis et insignem Stygiis foveat amnibus umbram*." Agave pursues Pentheus; but "*fugit ille per avia Lethes Et Stygios super usque lacus ubi mitior illum Flet pater et lacerum componit corpus Echion*" (IV. 567). Tisiphone is addressed as queen of the seething whirlpool, "*regina barathri*" (I. 85). Cf. "putte of helle" in Chaucer's version of Boethius (III. Metre 12).

"And this on every god celestial  
I swere it yow, and eek on eche goddesse  
On every *Nymph* and deite infernal,  
On *Satiry* and *Fauny* more and lesse  
That halve goddess been of wildernessse" (IV. 1541-5).

Cf. *Theb.* iv. 683 "Undarum vocat ille deas mediusque silentum  
Incipit: '*agrestes fluviorum numina Nymphae*'"; VI. 88  
"*Nymphas* etiam mutasse superstes *Faunorum* greges"; VI.  
105 "*Semideumque pecus*, migrantibus adgemit illis *Silva*, nec  
amplexae dimittunt robora *Nymphae*"; I. 205 "turbe *vagorum*  
*semideum*."

"And Attropos my threed of lyf to-breste" (IV. 1546);  
*Theb.* VIII. 11 "Quin comminus ipsa Fatorum deprensa colus,  
visoque paventes Augure tunc demum *rumpebant stamina Parcae*." Atropos usually cuts the thread of life (*Theb.* v. 74).  
Chaucer sometimes intentionally perverts mythology to give a  
humorous touch. Cf. *Troil.* iv. 1207 "And Attropos, make  
redy thou my bere!"

"And thou, *Simois*, that as an arwe clere,  
Thorough Troye rennest ay downward to the see,  
*Ber witnesse* of this work that seyde is here,  
That thilke day that ich untrewed be  
To Troilus, myn owene herte free,  
That thou *retorne bakwarde to thy welle*,  
And I with body and soule sinke in helle!" (IV. 1548-54).

As the *Filostrato* has nothing corresponding to this stanza, Criseyde's implication that the Simois would sooner flow backward than she would prove false may have been suggested by Statius *Theb.* VIII. 553 where Tydeus says that the Inachus and Achelous will sooner flow backwards than Eteocles will allow his brother to escape when once in his power within the walls of Thebes. Note further that Criseyde here invites the fate of Amphiarus if she should prove untrue; cf. *Troil.* II. 105.

## Troilus. Book V.

Approchen gan the fatal destinee  
 That Ioves hath in disposicioun,  
 And to you, angry Parcas, sustren three  
 Committeth, to don execucioun (v. 1).

Jove's utterances become Fate; "grave et inmutabile sanctis Pondus adest verbis, et vocem Fata sequuntur" (*Theb.* i. 212). Jove, upon charging Mars with the conduct of the Theban war, tells the gods that any remonstrance on their part will be useless (*Theb.* iii. 241), "sic Fata mihi nigraeque Sororum Iuravere colus: manet haec ab origine mundi Fixa dies bello." Jove and the Fates operate together (*Theb.* vi. 354): "Sic Iovis imperia et nigrae volvere Sorores. Cf. v. 736-40.

The Parcae are often called *Sorores* by Statius; cf. *Theb.* i. 632, viii. 59, ix. 323; also *Troil.* iii. 733 "fatal sustren." Among the epithets of the Parcae used by the Latin poets, *immites*, *Theb.* vii. 774, is perhaps nearest to Chaucer's epithet *angry*. See Carter, *Epitheta*.

"The golden-tressed Phebus heighe on-lofte  
 Thryes hadde alle with his bemes shene  
 The snowes molte" (v. 8-10).

Skeat notes that ms. Harl. 3943 has *Auricomus tressed*. This tautologous reading is sufficient proof that *golden-tressed* is Chaucer's translation of *auricomus*. The epithet is probably taken from Mart. Cap. i. 12: "quod . . . hic (*Sol*) vocitetur *auricomus*. Nam Solis augustum caput radiis perfusum . . . velut auratam caesariem rutule verticis imitatur." Chaucer knew Martianus Capella at first hand and refers to him as one who described "hevenes region" (*H. F.* 985 ff.). He is again referred to *C. T.*, E. 1732. The only other passages in which Latin authors use *auricomus* to mean *golden-tressed* are *Val. Fl.* iv. 92 "auricomis . . . Horis," and *Sil. Ital.* iii. 608 "auri-como Batavo."<sup>1</sup> Variant expressions of Chaucer's metaphor

<sup>1</sup> See Münscher s. v. in *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*.



are "rutilam comam" (*Theb.* III. 408) and "fuderat in terras roseum iubar ignicomus sol" (Iuvenecus, *Evangelia* III. 1).

"To bedde he goth, and weyleth there and torneth  
In furie, as dooth he, Ixion, in helle" (v. 211 f.).

*Theb.* VIII. 50 "Cur autem avidis Ixiona frango *Verticibus?*"

"On hevене yet the sterres were sene,  
Although ful pale y-waxen was the mone;  
And whyten gan the orisonte shene  
Al estward, as it woned is to done.  
And Phebus with his rosy carte sone  
Gan after that to dresse him up to fare" (v. 274-279).

As there are no parallel lines in the *Filostrato*, Statius may be the source, *Theb.* XII. 1: "*Nondum cuncta polo vigil inclinaverat astra Ortus et instantem cornu tenuiore videbat Luna diem, trepidas ubi iam Tithonia nubes Discutit ac reduci magnum parat aethera Phoebos.*" Cf. also "roseum Titana" (I. 717).

In as much as the *Filostrato* contains no corresponding lines, one may suspect that Troilus' mind reverted sadly to the famous pyre and funeral games of Archemorus when he said to Pandarus (v. 302):

"But of the fyr and flaumbe funeral  
In whiche my body brenne shal to glede,  
And of the feste and pleyes palestral  
At my vigile, I pray thee take good hede  
That al be wel."

Chaucer elsewhere (v. 1499) divides the 6th book of the *Thebaid* into two parts: "Archimoris buryinge," i. e. "fyr and flaumbe funeral" (*Theb.* VI. 1-226), and "the pleyes" (*Theb.* VI. 227 ff.). See Skeat's note to v. 304.

"The poudre in which myn herte y-brend shal torne,  
That preye I thee thou take and it conserve  
In a vessel, that men clepeth an urne" (v. 309).

This last request which Troilus makes of his friend is similar to that which Polynices makes of his father-in-law before going

to fight the duel with his brother (*Theb.* xi. 190): "Sis lenis cineri, meque haec post proelia raptum Alitibus fratrique tegas urnamque reportes." Cf. also vi. 117 f. and ix. 11.

- "The owle eek which that hight Ascaphilo,<sup>1</sup>  
 Hath after me shrigh alle thise nightes two" (v. 318 f.).  
 "And troweliche eek augurie of thise foules. . . .  
 As ravenes qualm, or shryking of thise oules" (v. 380).  
 "The owle al night aboute the balkes wond,  
 That prophet is of wo and of mischaunce" (*Legend* 2253 f.).  
 "The oule eek, that of dethe the bode bringeth" (*Parl.* 343).

When Amphiaraus and Melampus were upon Mt. Apesas taking omens prophetic of the outcome of the Theban war, the heavens were filled with birds of ill omen (*Theb.* iii. 510): "Monstra volant, dirae stridunt in nube volucres Nocturnaeque gemunt striges et feralia bubo Damna canens." Lactantius commenting on *bubo* gives his version of the story, according to which Proserpine's mother metamorphosed Ascalaphus: "Indignata Ceres convertit Ascalaphum in bubonem." He adds further: "Quam sit feralis bubonis augurium, testis est poeta Virgilius: 'solaque culminibus ferali carmine bubo.'" See *Aen.* iv. 462. A close parallel to the lines quoted from the *Legend of Good Women* is Ovid *M.* vi. 431 "tectoque profanus Incubuit bubo thalamique in culmine sedit."

During his ten days' anxiety while waiting for Criseyde's promised return from the Greek camp, Troilus tried the virtue of a prayer to Cupid. He prayed him to send her to Troy again and not to be so cruel to the blood of Troy

- "As Juno was *un-to the blood Thebane*  
 For which the folk of Thebes caughte hir bane" (v. 601-2).

In the *Thebaid* Juno is always inimical to Thebes as she is to

<sup>1</sup> Ascalaphus, son of Acheron and Orphne, was metamorphosed into an ill boding owl (*bubo*) by Proserpine because he informed Pluto that she had forfeited her right to return to the upper world by eating something while in his realms. The story is told by Ovid *M.* v. 533-550; cf. especially 549 f. "Foeda fit volucris, venturi nuntia luctus Ignavus bubo, dirum mortalibus omen."

Troy in the *Aeneid*. Her anger was roused against Thebes because of Jove's relations with Semele and Alcmena. Cf. *Theb.* i. 12 "Unde graves irae cognata in moenia Baccho, Quod saevae Iononis opus." "Illam odimus urbem quam vultu confessus adis, ubi conscia magni Signa tori tonitrus agis et mea fulmina torques," says Juno (i. 256). Her wrath was especially baneful on several occasions. She sent Iris to command Somnus to steep the Thebans in forgetfulness, and then incited Tiresias to lead a host against them while in their stupor (*Theb.* x. 81, 126, 162, 282). She gave the wives of the dead chieftains favor in the eyes of Theseus and the Athenians with the result that he led his army against Thebes (xii. 291-464).

Chaucer seems to have followed Dante, *Inf.* xxx. 1:

"Nel tempo che Giunone era crucciata  
Per Semele contra il sangue tebano  
Come mostrò una ed altra fiata" . . . .

Juno's hatred of Thebes is often alluded to by Boccaccio; cf. *Tes.* iii. 1, iv. 14, 16, 17, v. 56, 58, ix. 44, x. 39, 94, xii. 26.

"Y-wis, me dredeth ever-mo,  
The sonnes sone, Pheton, be on-lyve,  
And that his fadres cart amis he dryve" (v. 662-4).

Cf. the words of Jove (*Theb.* i. 219): "Atque adeo tuleram falso rectore solutos Solis equos caelumque rotis errantibus uri, et Phaethontea mundum squalere favilla"; vi. 298: "Sic ignea lora Cum daret et rapido Sol natum imponeret axi." *H. F.* 941-56 shows that Chaucer was familiar with the story as told by Ovid *M.* ii. 32.

"Swich wreche on hem, for fecching of Eleyne,  
Ther shal be take, er that we hennes wende  
That Manes, which that goddes ben of peyne  
Shal been agast that Grekes wol hem shende" (v. 890-93).

Skeat refers to Verg. *Aen.* vi. 743 and Stat. *Theb.* viii. 84 where *Manes* means *supplicia*; see Harpers' *Lat. Dict.* But



this is not the sense in which Chaucer uses the word. It here means "departed spirits," as in the expression "Dis Manibus" of sepulchral inscriptions. The departed spirits of the Trojans whom the Greeks slay shall fear to take vengeance on their slayers, so horrible will be the death inflicted.

The notion that the Manes torment those who have caused violent death is several times expressed by Statius. Maeon, priest of Apollo, and sole survivor of the fifty warriors sent against Tydeus, in his denunciation of Eteocles says (*Theb.* III. 75): . . . "te diro horrore volantes Quinquaginta animae circum noctesque diesque Adsilient; neque enim ipse moror." When Tiresias summoned the Manes from Avernus in order that they might foretell the event of the Theban war, Laius came breathing out hatred even against the son of his murderer (IV. 606), "dirumque tuens obliqua nepotem . . . Immortale odium spirans." Tiresias assures the angry shade that Œdipus is suffering for his crimes (614) "Iacet ille in funere longo Quem fremis." When Polyxo slew her son, and the Lemnian women pledged themselves to kill every male on the island, the shade flitted around the mother while they performed the horrible rite, "Matremque recens circumvolat umbra" (v. 163). The Manes of the husbands of the Lemnian women hover about the roofs of the desolate homes (v. 312) "*Saevi spirant per culmina manes.*" The shrilling ghosts of the slain follow the car of Amphiaras in its terrible course of slaughter while Phoebus as charioteer aids his priest in making his last hours glorious (VII. 770), "strident animae currumque sequuntur." Cf. further: *Theb.* IX. 298, XI. 623, XII. 55, Verg. *Aen.* IV. 386, Lucan *De Bel. Civ.* IX. 17, Juv. xv. 105.

"And but-if Calkas lede us with ambages,  
That is to seyne, with double wordes slye,  
Swich as men clepe a word with two visages" . . . (v. 897-9).

Oracular responses were regularly *ambages*:<sup>1</sup> *Theb.* I. 495

<sup>1</sup> Though the Delphic priests kept themselves well informed and weighed probabilities to a nicety, they could not in many cases forecast events;

“(Adrastus) sensit manifesto numine ductos Adfore, quos nexis ambagibus augur Apollo Portendi generos, vultu fallente ferarum Ediderat” (cf. I. 396 f.); III. 614 “dum pallida virgo tremendas Nuntiet ambages.” So also in Laius when predicting the event of the Theban war “flexa dubios ambage relinquit” (IV. 645). The riddle propounded by the Sphinx was made up of such ambiguous words (I. 66 f.), “si Sphingos iniquae Callidus ambages te praemonstrante resolvi.” Chaucer uses the Latin form at the suggestion of Boccaccio; cf. *ambage*, *Filostrato* VI. 17. Chaucer’s synonym (*Troil.* IV. 1405) is *amphibologyes*.

“As help me *Pallas with her heres clere*” (V. 999).

*Flavus* is the Latin adjective descriptive of the color of Pallas’ hair, *Theb.* III. 507 “*flavae . . . Minervae*”; cf. Ovid. *A.* I. 1, 1, 7-8; *M.* 2, 749; 8, 275; *F.* 6, 652; *Tr.* 1, 10, 1.

The laurer-crowned Phebus, with his hete,  
Gan, in his course ay upward as he wente,  
To warnen of the est see the wawes wete” (V. 1107-9).

Cf. *Theb.* VII. 470 “*Iam gelidam Phoeben et caligantia pri-*

therefore they couched the sibyl’s oracular utterances in hexameters that were notably ambiguous. Such oracular responses, intended to fit the event in any case, were called *ambages*, less frequently *amphibologiae* or *amphiboliae*. A stock example is that given by Isodorus, *Orig.* I. 33, 13: “*Amphibologia, ambigua dictio . . . ut illud responsum Apollinis ad Pyrrhum:*

‘*Aio te, Aeacida, Romanos vincere posse.*’

In quo non est certum, quem in ipso versu monstraverat esse victorem.” Char. *Gramm.* I. 271, 26: “*Amphibolia est . . . sententia . . . dubiae significationis . . . ut*

‘*Aio te, Aeacida, Romanos vincere posse.*’

Ambigua enim sors fuit ante eventum utrum Pyrrhus a Romanis an Romani a Pyrrho vinci possent.” Mart. Capell. I. 9: . . . “in fanis quibus vaticinia obliquis fundebantur ambagibus.” Seneca, *Oed.* 214: “*Ambage flexa Delphico mos est deo arcana tegere.*” Cf. further: Verg. *Aen.* VI. 99; Ovid, *Fast.* IV. 261; IV. 668; Tac. *Ann.* II. 54; Prud. *Symm.* II. 893; Amm. Marc. 23. 5; Cic. *Div.* II. 116.

mus Hauserat astra dies, cum iam tumet igne futuro Oceanus  
lateque novo Titane reclusum Aequor anhelantum radiis subsidit  
equorum."

After Troilus' "swete fo" Criseyde had been given to the Greeks in exchange for Antenor and had failed to return to Troy within ten days as she had promised to do, Troilus had a dream in which he saw Criseyde fondled by a boar, v. 1238 f.:

"He mette he saugh a boar with tuskes grete  
That sleep ayein the brighte sonnes hete."

The Calydonian boar whose spoils were worn by Tydeus, the representative of the royal house of Calydon, is several times referred to in the *Thebaid*:—"terribiles . . . dente recurvo . . . exuviae, Calydonis honos" (I. 488); "Oeneae vindex sic ille Dianae erectus saetis et adunca fulmine malae" (II. 469 f.). Naturally, tusks are prominently mentioned in descriptions of wild boars; cf. *Theb.* XI. 532 and Ovid *M.* VIII. 288.

Cassandra, who interpreted the dream, said the boar betokened Diomed; and took the opportunity of giving an outline of the *Thebaid* in which Tydeus, father of Diomed, plays so prominent a part (v. 1485):—

"She tolde eek how Tydeus, er she stente,  
Unto the stronge citee of Thebes,  
To cleyne kingdom of the citee, wente,  
For his felawe, daun Polymites  
Of which the brother, daun Ethyocles,  
Ful wrongfully of Thebes held the strengthe;  
This tolde she by proces, al by lengthe.

She tolde eek how Hemonides asterte,  
Whan Tydeus slough fifty knightes stoute,  
She tolde eek al the prophesyes by herte,  
And how that sevene kinges with her route,  
Bisegeden the citee al aboute;  
And of the holy serpent and the welle,  
And of the furies, al she gan him telle.  
Of Archimoris buryinge and the pleyes,  
And how Amphiorax fil through the grounde,  
How Tydeus was slayn, lord of Argeyes.



And how Ypomedoun in litel stounde  
Was dreynt, and deed Parthonope of wounde;  
And also how Cappanēus the proude  
With thonder-dint was slayn, that cryde loude.

She gan eek telle him how that either brother,  
Ethyocles and Polmite also,  
At a scarmyche, eche of hem slough other,  
And of Argyves wepinge and her wo;  
And how the town was brent she told eek tho.  
And so descendeth doun from gestes olde  
To Diomede, and thus she spak and tolde.

‘This ilke boor bitokneth Diomede,  
Tydeus sone, that doun descended is  
Fro Meleagre, that made the boor to blede.  
And thy lady, wher-so she be, y-wis,  
This Diomede hir herte hath, and she his.  
Weep if thou wolt, or leef; for out of doute,  
This Diomede is inne, and thou are oute.’”

Such a comprehensive outline as this could have been made only by one who was familiar with the *Thebaid*. The Latin argument of twelve lines which is inserted in the mss. after line 1498 could have served as a guide; but is not a sufficient basis for Chaucer's outline.

ll. 1485-91: When Eteocles and Polynices gained possession of the Theban kingdom, they so shamefully insulted their blind father (*Theb.* i. 239 *Calcavere oculos*) that he cursed them and called upon Tisiphone to punish them by causing them to war against each other (i. 55-86). In answer to his prayer, the Fury inspired envy and hatred in the breasts of the brothers (i. 123). Being unable to rule jointly, they agreed to rule and suffer exile by turns for one year at a time (i. 137). The first year of rule fell to Eteocles by lot; and Polynices accordingly went into exile (i. 164 ff.). Jove, who also had been invoked by Œdipus, took part in avenging the father by giving Polynices Adrastus as his father-in-law (i. 235). Moreover, Cyllenius was sent to conduct Laius to the upper world that he might induce Eteocles to usurp the Theban throne (i. 293).

Tydeus and Polynices were fellows by virtue of a formal

treaty of friendship (II. 195). Besides they married the sisters Deipyle and Argia, the daughters of king Adrastus. Elsewhere a *felawe* is a sworn friend whose fidelity is equal to any sacrifice, and here also Chaucer no doubt intended the word to convey this pregnant meaning and may have had in mind Stat. *Theb.* I. 468-77 where the friendship of Tydeus and Polynices is compared to that of Theseus and Pirithous or of Orestes and Pylades.<sup>1</sup>

Polynices in his lament over the dead body of his friend, speaks thus of Tydeus' great love for him (*Theb.* IX. 65): "*Quin etiam Thebas me propter et impia fratris Tecta libens unde haut alius remeasset, adisti, ceu tibimet sceptrum et proprios laturus honores. Iam Telemona pium, iam Thesea fama tacebat.*"

Tydeus' embassy to Thebes in behalf of Polynices is described *Theb.* II. 370 ff. He arrived at the city, and gained audience of Eteocles; but the insolent king replied that he would keep the sceptre (II. 428). Tydeus defied the usurper, promised him war, and started on his return to Argos.

II. 1492-98: Eteocles, seeking to be revenged upon the defiant ambassador, dispatched fifty picked warriors to waylay him (*Theb.* II. 482). But when the attack was made, valiant Tydeus took up a position of advantage on the cliff where the Sphinx formerly dwelt; and slew all of his assailants except Haemonides (II. 555-692). Him Tydeus sent to the Theban king to report the slaughter of his knights. Thus Tydeus slew forty-nine warriors; but Chaucer, after the manner of classical

<sup>1</sup> Lactantius in his note to the *Theb.* I. 476 speaks of friendship between legendary heroes: "*Thesea Pirithoo hanc talem fidem vult esse qualem colebat antiquitas. Quattuor namque amicitiarum exempla fuisse certissimum est: Thesei et Pirithoi, Orestis et Pyladis, Achilles et Patrocli, Tydei et Polynicis. Tydeus vero causa Polynicis pergit ad Thebas ibique dimicans perlit.*" Cf. Ovid *Trist.* I. 5, 19-24, I. 9, 27-34; *Pont.* II. 3, 41-45. Chaucer was much impressed with the friendship idea; and in fact portrays another pair of *felawes* in Pandarus and Troilus; cf. particularly *Troil.* I. 696. A third pair, who broke the pact, were Palemon and Arcite; cf. *C. T.*, A. 1129-51 and 1191-1200, and see Skeat's note to 1132.

writers, gives the round number fifty. So Tydeus boasts that he slew fifty single-handed (VIII. 666). Cf. III. 362 "*ipse ego fessus quinquaginta illis heroum immanibus umbris.*"<sup>1</sup>

The prophecies which Cassandra repeated may have been those of Maeon, Amphiaraus, and Tiresias. Maeon who is called *vates* says to Eteocles (III. 71): "Murderous man, in your eagerness to banish laws and proudly reign though your brother be an exile, you have begun an impious war, and have prepared an army which omens forbade."

At Argos, the priest of Apollo, Amphiaraus, when taunted by Capaneus, makes known the fatal issue of the war (III. 640): "I saw portents of utter ruin, saw the fears of gods and men, saw Megaera in fiendish glee and Lachesis making void the age by twisting brittle life-threads. Put aside arms! See, the deity stands opposed to raving men! Behold the god! O wretched men, why seems it beautiful to dye with blood Aonia and the portentous Theban plain? But why do I strive to avert what has been decreed by fate? We are doomed to go—"

On the side of the Thebans the seer Tiresias consults the shades and obtains from Laius this disclosure of events to come (IV. 637): "War, war shall come and an innumerable host thronging on every side. Mars goads Lerna's fated sons to battle. Earthquake and thunderbolt await some; for others remain glorious death and delay of funeral fire by impious decree. Never fear; Thebes shall have the victory. The cruel brother shall not obtain the kingdom. But, Ah me! the heartless father shall have the answer to his prayer through Furies' aid and crime of brothers and guilty swords."

The Seven against Thebes were Adrastus (IV. 38), Poly-  
nices (IV. 74), Tydeus (IV. 93), Hippomedon (IV. 116 ff.),

<sup>1</sup> Skeat (II. p. 501) in his outline of the *Thebaid* strangely remarks that Tydeus escapes an ambush on his way (to Thebes), and returns to Argos instead of proceeding to Thebes. His note, if not due to a misunderstanding, is unfortunately worded. As stated above, Tydeus was assailed by the fifty while on his return journey.



Capaneus (iv. 165), Amphiaraus (iv. 187), Parthenopaeus (iv. 246). Their assembling hosts are described, *Theb.* iv. 1-308.

During the march to Thebes, the Argive host suffered greatly from thirst (iv. 723) because the water-nymphs had, at the request of Bacchus, caused all streams except the Langia to go dry (iv. 684). To this river, Hypsipyle, daughter of the Lemnian king, guided the thirsty legions (iv. 715). While performing this service, she left her charge,<sup>1</sup> the babe Archemorus, lying on the turf (iv. 777). But during her absence a serpent sacred to Jove stung the child to death (v. 511, 538).

Adrastus' gratitude aroused interest in the fair guide, and he requested Hypsipyle to tell something of her history (v. 20). Complying with his request, she told him that she was the daughter of Thoas, sometime king of Lemnos. The story of her life, like that of Aeneas' life, was closely connected with a great event. She described the awful night in which the Lemnian women, incited by Venus and the Furies, set about avenging neglect by slaying the males in the island. Hypsipyle piously concealed her father and helped him to escape. The Lemnian women, believing she had slain her father, chose her as their queen; but they later learned of the rescue and compelled her to flee to save her life. She was captured by a band of pirates and sold as a slave to Lycurgus (v. 497).

<sup>1</sup> Skeat's note (*Troil.* v. 1499-1505) is erroneous in that he says Archemorus was the infant son of Hypsipyle. According to Statius, Hypsipyle was only the child's nurse. His parents were Lycurgus and Eurydice. Cf. *Theb.* iv. 741 "*Hypsipylen, illi quamvis et ab ubere Opheltes Non suus, Inachi proles infausta Lycurgi, Dependet.*" Here is Hypsipyle's testimony: iv. 770 "*altricem mandati cernitis orbam Pignoris*"; v. 632 "*Ne tristes dominos orbamque inimica revisam Eurydice.*" Eurydice in her lament says: vi. 131 "*Non hoc Argolidum coetu circumdata matrum Speravite, nate, sequi*"; vi. 140 "*dum deside cura Credo sinus fidos altricis et ubera mando. Quidni ego? narrabat servatum fraude parentem Inson-tesque manus.*"

In the *Roman de Thèbes* also, Archemorus is the son of Lycurgus' queen. Witness the words of Hypsipyle (l. 2495):

"La reine par est tant fière  
 Pués qu'el verra son fil en bière  
 Qu'ele amot plus que nule rien,  
 El m'ocirra, ço sai jo bien" (cf. 2607 f.).

*furies* (l. 1498) is a clear reference to Hypsipyle's story of the infuriated women of Lemnos. The word may be Chaucer's rendering of *furiae*, the insane fury of the women which prompted their deed. Cf. v. 30:—"Immania vulnera, rector Integrare iubes, *Furias* et Lemnon et artis Arma inserta toris debeltatosque pudendo Ense mares"; v. 298 "*Patuere furores Nocturni*"; v. 454 "*Cineres furiasque meorum testor*"; vi. 143 "*En quam ferale putemus Abiurasse sacrum et Lemni gentilibus unam Immunem furiiis*"; v. 350 "*Heu ubi nunc furiae?*"

The entire sixth book of the *Thebaid* is taken up with a description of the burial rites of Archemorus and the funeral games in his honor. This book is the ultimate source for the burial rites of Arcite as described in the *Knights Tale*.

Amphiaraus, priest of Apollo, aided by his patron god, was inflicting terrible slaughter upon the Theban host, when suddenly the earth yawned, and he fell through the cleft into Tartarus (vii. 794). His sudden arrival in his war-chariot created great consternation in Pluto's realm (viii. 1 ff.).

Tydeus, who led the troops from Aetolia, his native land, is portrayed by Statius as the most doughty warrior of the Seven. He was slain by Melanippus and in turn slew his enemy (viii. 716 ff.). While in the death agony, he demanded that the head of Melanippus be brought; and, at the instigation of Tisiphone, died gnawing it (viii. 739, 760). In consequence of this savagery, Pallas could not carry out her design to stellify her favorite.

Hippomedon proved a terrible avenger of Tydeus, and drove the Thebans into the river Ismenos where he slew a great number of them (ix. 222). The river god, angered at the slaughter of his grandson Crenaeus, rose in such a torrent that the hero was overwhelmed in crossing and almost drowned (ix. 315, 455, 521). But Jove repressed the flood and Hippomedon gained the bank. However, he was so weakened that he fell an easy victim to the spears of the enemy (ix. 526).

Youthful Parthenopaeus, son of Atalanta, had joined the

Theban expedition against his mother's will (iv. 318). Diana, in answer to the prayer of her apprehensive votary, went to Thebes to do what she could to safeguard the lad. She filled his quiver with deadly arrows with which he pierced the Thebans with unerring aim (ix. 729). But Atalanta's presentiments were true; for fate had decreed his death. He was wounded by a spear hurled by Dryas; and died while dictating a pathetic message to his mother.

Capaneus, contemptor divum (iii. 602), was struck dead with a thunderbolt, while scaling the walls of Thebes and challenging Jove to battle (x. 902, 927).

ll. 1506-12. Tisiphone, wishing to end her Theban campaign with a fitting climax, summoned her sister Megaera from Erebus, and planned to incite Eteocles and Polynices to single combat (xi. 168, 245). Despite the entreaties of Jocasta, Antigone, and Adrastus, the brothers met and fought on the plain outside the city walls (xi. 389). Polynices wounded Eteocles (xi. 540), who feigned to expire at once; but when Polynices bent over him to despoil him of his armor, Eteocles sheathed his sword in his brother's heart. Together they sought the Stygian realm to hate each other still (xi. 570).

Chaucer no doubt refers to Argia's weeping and woe on the occasion of her midnight search for her husband Polynices on the battlefield at Thebes. When she found the body, "senses, sight, and hearing fled; and stony grief repressed her tears." Her wail is found xii. 322 ff.

Chaucer's statement that Thebes was burned may have been taken from either the *Teseide* or the *Roman de Thèbes*, but finds little support in the *Thebaid*. It is true that Statius mentions fire as a possibility, but he nowhere states that Thebes was actually burned. Jove, angry at Mars' delay in bringing the Argives and Thebans into conflict, sends Mercury to chide him. He is reproached with being slow to obey the Thunderer's command to assail the walls of Thebes, though he is in the habit of burning cities for self-gratification (vii. 22): "At si ipsi rabies ferrique insana voluptas Qua tumet, immeritas cineri dabit impius urbe Ferrum ignemque ferens."



When Jocasta went to the Argive camp to entreat Polynices not to make war upon his native city, she invited him to visit the dwellings which he purposed to burn (vii. 507): "I mecum patriosque deos arsuraque saltem tecta vide."

The Thebans raised such an angry shout at the slaughter of their sacred tigers that one who heard it would have thought the enemy had gained entrance to the city and applied the torch to its dwellings (vii. 599): "Templa putes urbemque rapi facibusque nefandis / Sidonios ardere lares, sic clamor apertis / exoritur muris."

Encouraged by the midnight slaughter of Thebans by Thiodamas and his band, the Argives made a furious assault upon the city (x. 528): "*Pars ad fastigia missas / exultant hae-sisse faces, pars ima lacesunt / scrutanturque cavas caeca testu-dine turre.*" Upon this occasion the besiegers had driven in a scouting party of Thebans and nearly succeeded in following them within the city gates, creating such consternation among the inhabitants that they imagined they saw fire in every quarter (x. 561): "Ferrum undique et ignes / mente vident."

Tiresias, the Theban seer, seems to have feared that Thebes would be burned (x. 594): "'Te, tamen, infelix,' inquit, 'per-ituraque Thebe, / si taceam, nequeo miser exaudire cadentem / Argolicumque oculis haurire vacentibus ignem.'"

When Capaneus was scaling the walls, bearing his oak-tree torch (x. 843), the defenders were as much alarmed as if Bellona had been approaching the city with bloody torch (x. 853): "Tum vero attoniti fatorum in cardine summo, / ceu suprema lues urbi facibusque cruentis aequatura solo turre Bellona subiret." The burning of the city may have been suggested to Chaucer by all of these references in Statius. It is more likely, however, that his source was Boccaccio in whose account the Argive women took advantage of Theseus' permission to do as they pleased with the city (*Tes.* ii. 77), and burned it by way of taking vengeance for Creon's cruelty (*Tes.* ii. 81):

"Ma prima giro in Tebe; e non potendo  
Altra vendetta far, la giro ardendo."

Among the events affecting the life of Arcita, as portrayed in the temple of Juno where his ashes reposed, was seen the burning of Thebes by the Grecian women:

*Tes.* XI. 74: "*E vediensi le donne achivi gire  
Nell' alte torri con diversi stuoli,  
E arder ogni cosa, poscia ch'esse  
Ebber le corpora in le fiamme messe.*  
XI. 75: *E quella tutta nel fuoco avvampare.*"

Cf. *Tes.* II. 90; III. 1; IV. 12-16.

When the *Knights Tale* A. 990 is compared with the *Roman de Thèbes* 10137 ff., it will appear that Chaucer could have taken his statement that Thebes was burned from the Old French as well as from the Italian. In the *Roman*, Theseus is represented as winning the city by assault. When the Grecian women threw down the wall:

Sor la tor uns arbalestiers  
S'en aperçut trestoz premiers,  
Si comença fort a huchier  
Que mont sont près de l'aprochier:  
"Veez les murs escraventer  
Et ceus defors dedens entrer"!  
Li gentiz dus, quant l'entendié,  
Dreit al pertus a fort tendié;  
"Le fou! le fou!" a crier prist,  
En la cité par tot le mist:  
Qui donc veïst les tors crever  
Et les hauz murs escraventer,  
Grant dolor en poïst avoir  
Des granz tors que veïst chaeir (10123-36).

With *Thèbes* 10123-28, cf. *Thebaid* x. 489 Iamque premunt muros . . . miseramque intrabant protinus urbem / ni Megareus specula citus exclamasset ab alta: / "Claude, vigil, subeunt hostes, claudite undique portas!"

The Latin argument of the *Thebaid* found in the mss. of the *Troilus* after l. 1498 was copied from some ms. of the *Thebaid*. Chaucer's spelling *Argyve* (l. 1509) for *Argia* is a strong indication that he himself placed the Latin argument in the centre of his outline. The mss. spell the Latin name *Argivam* or

*Argyvam*; and Skeat records no variation in the English form. Note also the similarity of the English *Polymites*, *Hemonides*, *Archimorus Ypomedoun*, *Parthonope* to the Latin forms.

The Latin argument in the *Troilus* differs from that printed in the Lemaire edition of Statius (II. 2). The variants are such that Chaucer's form of the argument could be used in identifying the very ms. of Statius from which it was copied. The Lemaire argument is transcribed below; and variants are added from the Chaucerian form:

"Associat profugum Tydeo *Primus* Polynicem,  
Tydea legatum docet, insidiasque, *Secundus*,  
*Tertius* Hermonidem canit, et vates latitantes.  
*Quartus* habet reges, ineuntes praelia, septem,  
Mox furiae seni *Quinto* narrantur, et anguis.  
Archemori bustum, *Sexto*, ludique leguntur,  
Dat Graios Thebis, et vatem *Septimus* umbris.  
*Octavo*, cecidit Tydeus, spes fida Pelasgis.  
Hippomedon *Nono* queritur, cum Parthenopeo.  
Fulmine percussus *Decimo* Capaneus superatur.  
*Undecimo* sese perimunt per vulnera fratres.  
Argiam flentem memorat *Duodenus*, et ignes."<sup>1</sup>

1. Tideo, Polimitem; 2. Tideia; 3. Tercius, Hemoniden; 4. prelia; 5. furie, Lenne for seni, narratur; 6. Archimori; 7. Thebes; 8. Tideus, vita for fida; 9. Ypomedon, moritur for queritur, Parthonopeo; 12. Argivam, narrat for memorat, ignem.

Chaucer gives a second outline of the *Thebaid* in the *Anelida*, ll. 50-70 and 24-42. There, however, Boccaccio's *Teseide* is an intermediary.

In the first stanza of his envoy, Chaucer names the great poets whose fame he can not hope to equal; and includes among them Stace, whose envoy he imitates in manner and phrase. In the instructions given for their journey, both poems are told to kiss the footsteps of illustrious works that have gone before.

<sup>1</sup> Ignis of l. 12 refers to the burial pyres. It is not likely that Chaucer misunderstood the word and referred it to burning of the city, in view of his familiarity with the story itself.



Both envoys mention envy of poetry with the difference that in Statius the envy proceeds from others.

“Go, litel book, go litel myn tragedie,  
 Ther god thy maker yet, er that he dye,  
 So sende might to make in some comedie!  
 But litel book, no making thou *nenvy*,  
 But subgit be to ‘alle poesye;  
 And *kiss the steppes*, whereas thou seest pace  
*Virgile*, Ovyde, Omer, Lucan, and Stace” (v. 1786-1792).  
*Durabisne procul dominoque legere superstes,*  
*O mihi bisenos multum vigilata per annos*  
*Thebai? iam certe praesens tibi Fama benignum*  
*Stravit iter coepitque novam monstrare futuris.*  
*Iam te magnanimus dignatur noscere Caesar,*  
*Itala iam studio discit memoratque iuventus.*  
*Vive, precor; nec tu divinam Aeneida tempta,*  
*Sed longe sequere et vestigia semper adora.*  
*Mox, tibi si quis adhuc praetendit nubila livor,*  
*Occidet, et meriti post me referentur honores”* (xii. 810-19.)<sup>1</sup>

In the *Troilus*, the direct influence of Statius is extensive. It is seen both in the form and in the content of the poem; and is second in importance only to that of Boccaccio. The invocations probably, and certainly the envoy, are imitated from Statius; and numerous close parallels show that Chaucer was at this period very familiar with the *Thebaid*. The outline of it (v. 1485-1509) is comprehensive and represents first-hand knowledge. The manner in which Boccaccio's mere mention of Diomed in boar's form is seized upon by Chaucer to introduce more of the history of the illustrious line of Calydon, nowhere more glorious than in the feats of Tydeus, hero of the *Thebaid*, shows not only familiarity but great fondness.

#### THE HOUSE OF FAME.

In the House of Fame, to which Jove's eagle carried Chaucer, he heard all the famous trumpeters (*H. F.* 1243):

<sup>1</sup> For typical expressions of the Roman poets concerning their works, see Riedner's excellent dissertation, pp. 66-76.

"Ther herde I trumpen Messenus,  
Of whom that speketh Virgilius,  
Ther herde I Ioab trumpe also,  
*Theodomas* and other mo."

From the *Merchant's Tale* E. 1720 f., it appears that Thiodamas blew the trumpet at Thebes "whan the citee was in doute." On the day after the seer had made his midnight attack upon the Theban intrenchments, the Argive host assailed the city with renewed fury. The blare of trumpets sounded the attack, but Thiodamas is not mentioned in this connection (x. 552): "At *tuba* luctificis pulsat clangoribus urbem obsaepasque fores sonitu perfringit amaro." This is the only time when the city was in doubt after Thiodamus became chief soothsayer to the Greeks. Chaucer must have inferred that Thiodamus was the trumpeter who sounded the charge for which his warlike ardor, displayed so disastrously for the enemy the preceding night, had prepared the way. The most likely leader would have been the newly-elected priest flushed with a notable victory. This must be the occasion to which Chaucer refers: it is the most conspicuous instance of trumpeting in the *Thebaid*.

In the House of Fame, were two rows of pillars upon which were set the statues of famous poets.

"These, of which I ginne rede,  
Ther saugh I stonden, out of drede:  
Upon an yren piler strong,  
That peynted was al endelong,  
With tygres blode in every place,  
The Tholosan that highte Stace,  
That bar of Thebes up the fame  
Upon his shuldres, and the name  
Also of cruel Achilles" (*H. F.* 1455-63).

In order to characterize Statius by his magnum opus, the story of the siege of Thebes, Chaucer represents him upon an iron pillar painted with tiger's blood. Iron is Mars' metal (cf. *H. F.* 1446 f. and *C. T.*, A 1994); and the tiger's blood points unmistakably to Thebes, where that animal was regarded as sacred.

Skeat thinks the pillar is described as painted with tiger's blood solely because of an episode related in the *Thebaid* (vii. 564 ff.): Before hostilities began, Jocasta and her daughters, Antigone and Ismene, went to the Grecian camp to entreat Polynices not to make war on his native city. The sternness of the exile and of some of the leaders had been so far overcome that a peaceful settlement might have been made had not Tisiphone infuriated two tame tigers which were sacred to Bacchus. Impelled by her serpent lash, they bounded over the plain and slew three men belonging to the besieging host. Acontus, who saw their attack, pursued the tigers, and slew them near the city walls, whereupon the enraged Thebans joined battle with the Argives.

This incident is very striking, and may have called Chaucer's attention to the fact that the tiger stands for Thebes. Bacchus, the city's patron god, favored that animal above all others by yoking it to his chariot (cf. *Theb.* iv. 657; vii. 564 f.). The fact that the tiger was held sacred at Thebes, may have had something to do with the frequency with which that animal is mentioned in the *Thebaid*. Cf. ii. 128, iii. 658, 693, vi. 697, 763, ix. 686, x. 411, 820, xii. 170. As the tiger was deemed sacred at Thebes, so was the lion at Tiryns; cf. *Theb.* iv. 154 and xi. 45.

On Achilles (l. 1463) and Tholosan (l. 1460) see pp. 270 and 274.

#### LEGEND OF GOOD WOMEN.

The Legend of Hypsipyle (l. 1368 ff.). In the *Thebaid* (v. 335-485), Hypsipyle herself tells the story of the arrival of the Argonauts at Lemnos while she was queen of the island. She entertained Jason; and in return for her kindness was betrayed and deserted by him. If Chaucer consulted Statius (see Skeat iii, p. xxxix.), no definite traces of influence are discernible in his own version of the story. Indeed, that part of the story told in ll. 1469-1563 is essentially different from Statius' account and yet this is the only portion that can be compared



with the *Thebaid*. According to Statius, the Lemnian women opposed the landing of the Argonauts, supposing that they were Thracian warriors. There is no mention of the small boat (*cogge*) in which only Jason and Hercules came to land. Besides, the weather was fair at the time of the landing (l. 1483) whereas Statius describes a violent storm which raged during the attack by the Lemnian women. Statius says nothing about Hercules' part in the plot against the queen (v. 452).

Ll. 1564 ff. are evidently based upon Ovid, *Heroid.* vi.; cf. particularly ll. 1568-75 and *Heroid.* vi. 122 f. and 155 f. Ll. 1396-1461 are professedly taken from Guido delle Colonne. The order and moments of the narrative of these lines are very similar to that in the *Laud Troy Book* (ed. by J. E. Wülfing, London, 1902, E. E. T. S. 121), ll. 101-378. For the list of the Argonauts, Chaucer (l. 1457) refers us to the *Argonauticon*; it is found in *Val. Fl.* i. 350-484. It would seem that Chaucer could not have known this portion of *Val. Fl.*, for it was part of Poggio's discovery in 1416. But this form of the title of Valerius' epic must be due to a source other than that suggested by Skeat.

#### COMPLEYNT UNTO PITE.

In connection with this poem, I have to report Professor Skeat's brilliant<sup>1</sup> explanation of *Herenus* (l. 72).

"Have mercy on me, thou *Herenus* quene."

This is the reading best attested by the mss. The scansion of the line requires that the accent fall on the second syllable of the word; hence *Herénus* can not be an error for *hévenes* (or *hevenus*), though forms of *heven* are frequently found in the cadence of Chaucer's verses (cf. *C. T.*, G 1089, 87, 542, A. B.

<sup>1</sup> This explanation may be acutior quam verior, but must stand, unless a French original of the poem be discovered. See the *Oxford Chaucer*, vol. i. p. 62, and the notes to ll. 57, 64, 92; also his letter to *The Academy*, Jan. 7, 1888, p. 9.

C. 24, 149, *C. T.*, E 2406, A 3464). In fact, *Herénus* is a variant spelling of *Herines* which occurs in the *Troilus* (iv. 22):—

“O ye Herines, nightes doughtren three.”

Although one would expect the queen of the Furies to be herself a Fury (*Tisiphone* according to *Stat. Theb.* i. 85), yet Professor Skeat explains how *Pity*, “humblest of herte, hyest of reverence,” is their queen (note to l. 92): “*Pity* may be said to be the queen of the Furies, in the sense that *pity* (or *mercy*) can alone control the vindictiveness of vengeance.”

Professor Skeat discovered Chaucer’s source for this characterization of *Pity* as well as for the idea of personifying the virtue in contrast to its contrary, *Cruelty* (i. p. 62): “The struggle between *Pity* and *Cruelty* in Chaucer’s poem (cf. ll. 80, 89 f.) is parallel to the struggle between *Pietas* and the fury *Tisiphone* as told in *Statius*.” Cf. *Theb.* xi. 457-496; also the words of *Erinyes* (xi. 98): “*Licet alma Fides Pietasque repugnent vincentur.*”

*Tisiphone*, sated with carnage, sought to put an end to the war by driving *Eteocles* and *Polynices* into single combat. Summoning her sister *Megaera* from *Tartarus*, she assigns to her the task of inciting the exile to a duel while she herself hastens to *Thebes* to infuriate *Eteocles*, and compel him to accept his brother’s challenge (xi. 57 ff.). Despite the entreaties of kindred and friends, *Eteocles* and *Polynices* meet before the city walls, each thirsting for a brother’s blood. *Mars* and *Bellona* flee in horror; and the *Theban Manes*, by *Pluto*’s permission, come to be spectators of the combat. The goading furies control the reins, and intertwine the horses’ manes with hissing serpents.

At this juncture, the goddess *Pietas*, created by *Nature* to restrain the cruel propensities of men and even of the gods, weeping at the fraternal strife and threatening to leave heaven and take up her abode in *Erebus*, resolved to make a final attempt to turn the combatants from their design (xi. 457 ff.).

She glided down to the battlefield, assumed the form of a warrior, and for the moment overcame the martial passion of the spectators and revived in the breasts of the combatants that love which brother should have for brother. The brothers would have yielded to her chiding had not cruel Tisiphone, discovering her disguise, rebuked her and attacked her with torch and serpents whereupon the modest goddess veiled her face with her cloak, and fled from the scene.

Skeat notes that Pietas and Pity have a quality in common; cf. *humblest of herte* (l. 57) with *Theb.* xi. 493, where Pietas is described as veiling her face (*puḍibunda ora*) at the horrid sight of the Fury. Reverence is due both; cf. *hyest of reverence* (l. 57) with *reverentia* (xi. 467).

If Dr. Furnivall (*Trial Forewords*, p. 12) is right in regarding this poem as Chaucer's earliest work that is not a translation, then it represents his first borrowing from Statius. The conjectural date of composition assigned by Skeat is the year 1367 (vol. i. p. 62).

#### BOOK OF THE DUCHESS.

Chaucer adapts Ovid in his description of the cave of Somnus (ll. 153-193; cf. *Met.* xi. 592 ff.). But evidence is not lacking that he added several features from Statius' description of this cave (*Theb.* x. 84 ff.):

"This messenger took leve and wente  
Upon his wey, and never ne stente  
Til he com to the derke valeye  
That stant bytwene roches tweye . . .  
Save ther were a fewe welles  
Came renning fro the clifles adoun,  
That made a deedly sleping soun,  
And ronnen down right by a cave  
That was under a rokke y-grave  
Amid the valey, wonder depe" (153-65).

Cf. *Theb.* x. 86 *Subterque cavis grave rupibus antrum* It vacuum in montem. x. 95 *Ipse profundis Vallibus effugiens spelunca proximus amnis Saxa inter scopulosque iacet.* Grave



may have suggested *y-grave*, although Chaucer would have known perfectly well that this was not its meaning.

The corresponding lines in Ovid are (*Met.* xi. 592): *Est prope Cimmerios longo spelunca recessu / mons cavus, ignavi domus et penetralia Somni quo numquam radiis oriens mediusve cadusve / Phoebus adire potest. Nebulae caligine mixtae / exalantur humo.* 602 *Saxo tamen exit ab imo / rivus aquae Lethes, per quem cum murmure labens / invitat somnos crepitantibus unda lapillis.*

Observe that the underscored lines in Chaucer are much closer to Statius than to Ovid: "cave that was under a rokke y-grave" is precisely "subterque cavis grave rubibus antrum"; "valey wonder depe" is "profundis vallibus"; "that stant bytwene roches tweye" is "saxa inter scapulosque iacet." In Ovid the stream issues from the cave; in Statius it runs down right by a cave (*effugiens speluncae proximus amnis*). Here as usual, Chaucer has combined sources. Cf. *H. F.* lines 66-76 which are borrowed from Ovid alone. See Skeat's notes (III. 247).

#### COMPLEYNT OF MARS.

In ms. Harl. 7333, Shirley entitles this poem, "The broche of Thebes, as of the love of Mars and Venus" (Skeat I. 64). He probably means that the monile Harmoniae was made in consequence of the amour between Mars and Venus. At any rate, its intimate association with this amour accounts for its being described in the poem. Lydgate, in the prologue to his "Fall of Princes," curiously refers to this poem as one concerning "the broche which that Vulcanus at Thebes wrought" (Tyrwhitt, *Canterbury Tales* I. p. xlv).

The story of Mars and Venus as told by Ovid *M.* iv. 170-189 is recast by Chaucer and made astrological. The same story is referred to by Statius, *Theb.* III. 269 ff.; but as sketched there does not furnish a sufficient basis for Chaucer's elaborated version. Venus, in her attempt to dissuade Mars from conducting the war against Thebes, says (III. 271): "Nec genus

Harmoniae nec te *connubia caelo* / *fasta* nec hae quicquam la-  
crimae, furibunde, morantur? / *Criminis haec merces?* *Hoc*  
*fama pudorque relictus,* / *hoc mihi Lemniacae de te Meruere*  
*catenae?* / *Perge libens*; at non eadem Vulcania nobis / obse-  
quia, et laesi servit tamen ira mariti!"

Though Chaucer was compelled to eliminate Vulcan's brazen net (*M.* iv. 176) from his astrological account of the intrigue, he did not lose the opportunity to describe Harmonia's necklace, another product of the skill of the Lemnian artificer. The anger of an injured husband summoned all his cunning to impart a dire force to the dotal ornament, which was to bring punishment upon Harmonia's parents by bringing ill to her and to all their line as successive generations should possess the heirloom. Chaucer's source for his account of the monile Harmoniae (ll. 245-266) is *Stat. Theb.* ii. 265-305. Statius attributes the omens of misfortune at the marriage of Polynices and Tydeus to the daughters of Adrastus to the fact that Argia, the bride of Polynices, wore the necklace, which had been given her by the groom.

Chaucer, like Statius, dilates upon the saeva potentia of the ornament, which arose from the materials used in its construction.

"The broche of Thebes was of suche a kinde,  
So ful of rubies and of stones Inde,  
That every wight, that sette on hit an yē,  
He wende anon to worthe out of his minde;  
So sore the beaute wolde his herte binde,  
Til he hit hadde, him thoughte he moste dye" (245-50).

"Tradition hath it that Vulcan, long incensed at the intrigue of Mars, after punishment proved no hindrance to headlong love and the avenging net did not restrain, fashioned for Harmonia a dotal ornament against her wedding day. The cyclops, though skilled in forging mightier weapons, wrought upon it; the Telchines, acquainted with the arts, eagerly gave aid with friendly hand; but Lemnius himself toiled most of all. There he arranges in a circle emeralds green with hidden flame, adamant inwrought with baleful shapes, ringlets from the Gorgon

head, scales from thunderbolts left on Sicilian anvils, and shining crests of green dragons; here (he sets) a mournful twig from the Hesperides and dire gold of the Phrixean fleece. Then he interweaves various plagues, a serpent snatched from Tisiphone's dismal locks, and whatever force Venus' girdle proves most baneful. He cunningly anoints the whole with lunar foam, and steeps it in the poison of fair-seeming. Not Pasithea, first of the charming sisters, not Beauty, nor the Idalian youth touched it; but Grief, Wrath, Resentment, and Discord pressed it with cordial grasp" (*Theb.* II. 269-88).

"But he that wroghte hit enfortuned hit so,  
That every wight that had hit shuld have wo" (259 f.).

The women who came to grief because they wore the necklace<sup>1</sup> were Harmonia, Semele, Iocasta, Argia, and Eriphyle (*Theb.* II. 290 ff.). Its power to make those who saw it covet it is brought out in connection with Eriphyle (II. 299): "Viderat hoc coniunx perituri vatis et aras / ante omnes epulasque trucem secreta coquebat / invidiam, saevis detur si quando potiri / cultibus."

#### ANELIDA AND ARCITE.

With exception of the mention of Emelye in l. 38 (taken from the *Teseide*), lines 22-42 of this poem are based directly upon the *Thebaid*. Chaucer gives a clue to his source by quoting the beginning of Statius' description of the triumph of Theseus after his victory over the Amazons (*Theb.* XII. 519). The summary of the preceding portion of the *Thebaid*, given in lines 50-70, is imitated from Boccaccio. Chaucer's original outline of the *Thebaid* is found in the *Troil.* v. 1484 ff.

Here as in the *Kn. Ta.*, Chaucer indicates by a quotation

<sup>1</sup> Skeat (note to l. 245), following Lewis' translation, calls Harmonia's *monile* a bracelet. The usage of the word in Latin does not justify this translation. A *monile* was worn about the neck not on the arm. Cf. *Theb.* II. 292 "Semele . . . dona nocentia collo induit"; Verg. *Aen.* I. 654 "colloque monile bacatum."



that portion of the *Thebaid* from which he borrows. These three lines head the story in the MSS., that is to say, they are found just before l. 22 of the poem:—

"*Iamque domos patrias Scythicae post aspera gentis  
Praelia laurigero subeuntem Thesea curru,  
Laetifici plausus missusque ad sidera vulgi*" (12, 519-21).

"*Whan Theseus, with werres longe and grete,  
The aspre folk of Cithe had over-come,  
With laurer crowned, in his char gold-bete,  
Hoom to his contre-houses is y-còme;—  
For which the peple blisful, al and somme,  
So cryden, that unto the sterres hit wente,  
And him to honouren dide al hir entente*";— (22-28).

Cf.: *Iamque domus patrias Scythicae post aspera gentis  
Proelia laurigero subeuntem Thesea curru  
Laetifici plausus missusque ad sidera vulgi Clamor* (XII. 519-22).

"*Beform this duk, in signe of hy victorie,  
The trompes come, and in his baner large  
The image of Mars; and in token of glorie,  
Men mighten seen of tresor many a charge,  
Many a bright helm, and many a spere and targe,  
Many a fresh knight, and many a blisful route,  
On hors, on fote, in al the felde aboute*" (29-35).

*Theb.* XII. 522:

"*et emeritis hilaris tuba nuntiat armis.  
Ante ducem spolia et, duri Mavortis imago,  
Virginei currus cumulataque fercula cristis  
Et tristes ducuntur equi truncaequae bipennes,  
Quis nemora et solidam Macotida caedere suetae,  
Corytique leves portantur et ignea gemmis  
Cingula et informes dominarum sanguine peltae.*"

Here we observe how freely Chaucer rearranges the material given by his original. He has joined parts of different sentences; "*ante ducem*" and "*emeritis hilaris tuba nuntiat armis*" which give him exactly "*Beform this duk, in signe of hy victorie / the trompes come.*" He has transferred the adj. *aspera* from *proelia* to *gentes*, *laurigero* from *curru* to *Thesea*. Particularly noteworthy is the close translation of word and phrase: cf. *aspre* with *aspera*, *lauer-crowned* with *laurigero*,

*contre-houses with domos patrias, so cryden that unto the sterres hit wente with clamor ad sidera missus, the image of Mars with Mavortis imago.*

"Ipolita his wyf, the hardy quene  
Of Cithia, that he conquered hadde,  
With Emelye, hir yonge suster shene,  
Faire in a char of golde he with him ladde,  
That al the ground aboute hir char she spradde  
With brightnesse of the beautee in hir face,  
Fulfilde of largesse and of alle grace" (36-42).

Cf.: "Primus amor niveis victorem cenere vectum  
Quadriiugis; nec non populos in semet agebat  
Hippolyte, iam blanda genas patiensque mariti  
Foederis. Hanc patriae ritus fregisse severos  
Athides oblique secum mirantur operto  
Murmure, quod nitidi crines, quod pectora palla  
Tota latent, magnis quod barbara semet Athenis  
Misceat atque hosti veniat paritura marito" (XII. 532-39).

The mention of Hippolyte's sister (l. 38) is, of course, taken from Boccaccio; cf. *Tes.* I. 128; II. 9: "La bella Emilia, stella mattutina."

Chaucer restates the situation in a transitional stanza before he takes up his second author, Boccaccio:

"With his triumphe and laurer crowned thus,  
In al the floure of fortunes yevinge,  
Lete I this noble prince Theseus  
Towards Athenes in his wey rydinge" . . . (43-46).

For discussion of the indirect influence of Statius upon the *Anelida*, see pp. 66-78.

#### CANTERBURY TALES: Group A.

*Knightes Tale.* At the beginning of the *K. T.*, the mss. quote a line and a half from the *Thebaid*:

"Iamque domos patrias, Scithice post aspera gentis  
Preliis laurigero etc." (XII. 519 f.).

With these words, Statius begins his description of the trium-

phal entry of Theseus at Athens after his victory over Hippolyte, queen of the Amazons; and as the Knight's Tale opens with an account of this triumph, the appropriateness of the quotation is apparent. The *Thebaid* then is one of the "olde stories" to which Chaucer refers. He probably included two mediæval stories which he had used in describing Theseus' return to Athens, viz., Boccaccio's *Teseide* and the anonymous *Roman de Thèbes*. On the relation of the *Knightes Tale* to the *Teseide*, see p. 78, to the *Thèbes*, see p. 78.

In the *Teseide* II. 13-80, Boccaccio follows Statius, *Theb.* XII. 94-808, rather closely, all the essential elements of his account being drawn from his original. Chaucer, while writing the corresponding portion of the *K. T.* (A. 893-996), evidently had Statius open before him; and has combined sources in his usual felicitous manner. He combined the same sources in the introduction to the *Anelida* where he follows Statius much more closely than here in the *K. T.* Some features of Chaucer's version which do not appear in the *Teseide* indicate that he was alert to add any interesting detail neglected in his immediate source: the statement that Theseus made a night march towards Thebes (A. 970); the mention of the Minotaur (A. 980); and perhaps the mention of Fortune (A. 915).

Professor Skeat's explanation of Chaucer's puzzling reference to a tempest at Theseus' *hoom-cominge* is unsatisfactory.

"And of the tempest at her hoom-cominge" (A. 884).

Skeat's note: "I think the solution is to be found by referring to Statius. Chaucer seems to have remembered that a tempest is there described (*Theb.* XII. 650-5), but to have forgotten that is merely introduced by way of *simile*. In fact, when Theseus determines to attack Creon (see l. 960), the advance of his host is likened by Statius to the effect of a tempest. The lines are:—

'Qualis Hyperboreos ubi nubilus institit axes  
Iupiter, et prima tremefecit sidera bruma,  
Rumpit Aeolia, et longam indignata quietem



Tollit hiems animos, ventosque sibilat Aretos;  
 Tunc montes undaeque fremunt, tum proelia caesis  
 Nubibus, et tonitrus insanaque fulmina gaudent.'"

The Latin lines from the *Thebaid*, quoted at the head of the *Tale*, and other borrowings between lines A. 859 and 996 show that Chaucer was not writing from memory, but that he had Statius before him. If so, then he could hardly have made the mistake of supposing that Statius' simile (xii. 650) represented a real storm which would probably have been described in a passage antecedent to *Theb.* xii. 519. It was Chaucer's appreciation of the situation in Statius that decided him to make Theseus' triumph the starting point of the *Knights Tale* (cf. A. 872-74 and 893 ff.) and to summarize the story of the *Teseide* up to that point (i. e. to ii. 19). Accordingly he leaves the duke riding to Athens (A. 874), and outlines the *Teseide* up to the description of Theseus' triumph. Hence the tempest must have taken place before or during the triumph, the account of which Chaucer resumes at line 893, blending the *Thebaid* (xii. 540 ff.) with the *Teseide* (ii. 25 ff.). He must have known that Statius makes no mention of Theseus' voyage and that he describes only the triumphal entrance to Athens.

Boccaccio's only references to the weather during the homeward voyage are *Teseide* ii, strophes 9 and 18, where he clearly states that the wind was favorable:—

"Quindi spirando tra Borea e Coro  
 Ottimo vento, da quella marina  
 Li tolse, lor portando in verso Atene  
 Il più del tempo colle vele piene" (ii. 9).  
 "Teseo con vento fresco al suo viaggio  
 Contento ritornava in verso Atene" (ii. 18).

There is no classical source for the tempest of which Chaucer speaks and his only known mediæval source other than the *Teseide* is the *Roman de Thèbes* which says nothing about the Amazonian conquest or the triumphal return of Theseus to Athens. If Chaucer had for his account of the triumph no other source than the *Thebaid* and the *Teseide*, then line 884

as we have it is not what he wrote or else *tempest* is not literally used. If the reading were,

“And of the feste eek at hir hoom-cominge,”

the line would be an excellent report of *Tes.* II. 19-23 in which Boccaccio describes Theseus' festal triumph and the public rejoicing. In other words, A. 884 may be Chaucer's passing reference to the gala procession which attended Theseus from the harbor to the city, described at some length in the *Teseide*. He would thus complete his digressive outline of the *Teseide* with line 884. After some transitional lines he comes back (l. 893) to his starting point. The key of the situation is that Theseus has “come almost unto the toun” (cf. 872-74 with 893-95). This is the real beginning of the story, and was no doubt determined by the passage in Statius quoted at the head of the *Tale*. Is not A. 884 explained by *Tes.* II. 19:

“Gli Ateniensì, che lui pure attendieno  
Con gran disio, per la sua ritornata  
*Mirabil festa preparata avieno,*  
La qual fu incontanente cominciata,  
Secondo il lor poter (che assai potieno):  
Fu la lor terra tutta quanta ornata  
De drappi ad oro e d'altri paramenti  
Con infinite canti ed istromenti”?

If it is, then Chaucer may have written *feste*, not *tempest*.

If the emendation suggested be not allowed, then *tempest* is best taken figuratively in the sense of festal occasion (cf. l. 906, also *Thèbes* A. 414), and thus would still refer to *Tes.* II. 19 ff., for which there should be some equivalent in Chaucer's outline. The word *tempest* seems to be used figuratively in the *Thèbes*, l. 8760, referring to the storm of applause which greeted Minos and his host.

“Lord to whom fortune hath given  
Victorie, and as a conquerour to liven” (A. 915 f.).

The mention of Fortune at the very beginning of Evadne's appeal may have been suggested by the *Thebaid* XII. 547 where

Fortuna's favor toward Theseus is spoken of in the same connection:

"Belliger Aegide, *subitae cui maxima laudis  
Semina de nostris aperit Fortuna ruinis.*"

"The rede statue of Mars, with spere and targe,  
So shyneth in his whyte baner large,  
*That alle the feeldes gliteren up and down*" (975-7).

These lines were doubtless suggested by Statius, *Theb.* xii. 658 ff. "*Nec pulvere crasso / armorum lux victa perit, sed in aethera longum / frangitur, et mediis ardent in nubibus hastae.*" If so, the *feeldes* are those through which Theseus' host is marching, not, as Bell and Skeat think, "the ground upon which the various charges, as they are called, are emblazoned." The idea is that the rays of light from the emblazoned banner penetrate far into the darkness (cf. A. 970). The author of the *Roman de Thèbes* may also have had this passage of Statius in mind when describing Theseus' host (l. 9909):—

"Mout luisent cil heaume environ  
Et cil escu peint a leon;  
Des espiez sont dreites les lances,  
A toz a beles conoissances:  
*Trestote en reluist la contree,*  
D'icele gent issi armee;  
Environ la terre fremist  
*Et li pais en resplendist.*"

However, it was a commonplace in describing the march of an army to represent fields as being illuminated by the gleam of armor; cf. *Thèbes* 9525-30.

"And by his baner born is his penoun  
Of gold ful riche, in which there was y-bete  
The Minotaur, which that he slough in Crete" (978-80).

As the Minotaur is not mentioned in Boccaccio, the fact that the monster appears on Theseus' *penoun* is sufficient proof that Chaucer compared the accounts of Boccaccio and Statius. In the *Thebaid*, the Minotaur is embossed on Theseus' shield where the hero's victory is portrayed with such reality that the illusion



is complete when he rages in battle; for his terror-stricken enemies see Theseus twice:

"At procul ingenti Neptunius agmina Theseus  
Augustat clipeo, propriaeque exordia laudis  
Centum urbes *umbone gerit* centenaque Cretae  
Moenia, *seque ipsum monstrosi* ambagibus antri  
*Hispida torquentem* luctantis colla iuveni  
*Alternasque manus circum et nodosa ligantem*  
*Brachia et abducto vitantem cornua vultu.*  
Terror habet populos, cum saeptus imagine torva  
Ingreditur pugnas: bis Thesea bisque cruentas  
Caede videre manus" (XII. 665-74).

Palemon upbraids the cruel gods because they have allowed Arcite to go free while he is doomed to remain "in prison thurgh Saturne,

And eek thurgh Iuno, Ialous and eek wood,  
That hath destroyed wel my al the blood  
Of Thebes, with his waste walles wyde" (A. 1328-31).

The condition of the walls of Thebes at the time of Theseus' arrival with his host is described *Theb.* XII. 703 "Cessat fiducia valli / murorum patet omne latus, munimina portae / exposcunt: prior hostis habet, fastigia desunt, / deiecit Capaneus." Chaucer's expression "waste walles wyde" may have been suggested by "murorum patet omne latus." Cf. A. 1880 "Thebes, with his olde walles wyde."

On the cause of Juno's jealousy see the note to *Troil.* v. 601, p. 46 f.

"He was war of Arcite and Palamon,  
That foughten breme, as it were bores two;  
The brighte swerdes wenten to and fro . . ." (A. 1698-1700).  
"As wilde bores gonne they to smyte,  
That frothen whyte as foam for ire wood" (A. 1658 f.).

Similarly the duel between Eteocles and Polynices is likened to a fight between two wild boars (*Theb.* XI. 524 ff.): "Coeunt sine more, sine arte, / tantum animos irasque atque ignescentia cernunt / per galeas odia et vultus rimantur acerbo / lumine: nil adeo mediae telluris, et enses / impliciti nexaeque manus

alternaque saevi / murmura ceu lituos rapiunt aut signa tubarum. / *Fulmineos veluti praeceps cum comminus egit / ira sues strictisque erexit tergora saetis / igne tremunt oculi, lunataque dentibus uncis / ora sonant.*” As the *Teseide* affords no parallel to Chaucer’s lines, it is probable that he took the comparison from Statius.

Since Boccaccio does not mention a hill or a mountain when he locates the temple of Mars, there is little doubt that Chaucer is trying to bring out the force of “*averso domus inmansueta sub Haemo*” (*Theb.* vii. 42) when he says (A. 1981 f.):

“And downward from an hille, under a bente,  
Ther stood the temple of Mars armipotente . . .  
And ther-out cam a rage and such a vese  
That it made al the gates for to rese.”

These lines may have been suggested by *Primis salit Impetus amens / e foribus*” (*Theb.* vii. 47), or by *Tes.* vii. 33:

“Li gl’ *Impeti dementi* parve a lei  
Veder, che fier fuor della porta uscieno.”

But since *vese* is glossed by *impetus* in the Ellesmere and Hengwrt mss., Statius is the more likely source. The idea of a blast of wind shaking the gates is different from the idea of the leaping forth of Attack; but *impetus* also conveys the idea of rapid motion, and was thus a sufficient suggestion to Chaucer. See Skeat’s note.

“*The northren light in at the dores shoon*” (A. 1987).

*The northren light* is simply the sunlight in a northern clime such as that of Thrace where the temple of Mars was situated (A. 1972 f.). This line may have been suggested by Statius or by Boccaccio.

“*Laeditur adversum Phoebi iubar, ipsaque sedem  
Lux timet, et durus contristat sidera fulgor* (vii. 45 f.).

The baleful gleam from the temple meets the sunlight, and overcomes its cheerful effect; and so the light from without

does not succeed in penetrating into the recesses of the temple. Nor is the light of the moon and the stars more successful than that of the sun. Here, as usual, Chaucer does not render but adapts his source, allowing the light to shine into the temple. Cf. Skeat's note. The corresponding lines in Boccaccio are (*Tes.* VII. 32):—

“In questa vide la ca' dello Iddio  
Armipotente, e questa è edificata  
Tutta d'acciaio splendido e pulio,  
Dal quale era dal sol riverberata  
La luce, che abborriva il luogo rio.”

“The dores were alle of *adamante eterne*” (A. 1990).

*Theb.* VII. 68 “*Clausaeque adamante perenni / dissilueret fores*” and *Tes.* VII. 32 “*E le porte eran d'eterno diamante.*” Chaucer takes the noun from Statius, the adjective from Boccaccio.

The Italian parallel to A. 1995 f.,

“Ther saugh I first the derke imagining  
Of felonye, and al the compassing,”

is *Tes.* VII. 33:

“Ed il cieco Peccare, ed ogni Omei  
Similmente quivi si vedieno.”

But the word *first* indicates that Statius is the source (*Theb.* VII. 47):—“*Primis salit Impetus amens / e foribus caecumque Nefas.*”

“And al above, depeynted in a tour,  
Saw I conquest sittinge in greet honour,  
With the sharpe swerde over his heed  
Hanging by a sotil twynes threed” (A. 2527-30).

These lines were evidently suggested by the *Thebaid* (VII. 55): “*Fastigia templi / captae insignibant gentes, caelataque ferro fragmina portarum.*” . . . Cf. *Tes.* VII. 36:—

“Ed era il tempio tutto istoriato  
Da sottil mano e di sopra e d'intorno:  
E ciò che pria vide disegnato



Eran le prede di notte e di giorno  
 Tolte alle terre . . .  
 Vedevansi le genti incatenate."

Boccaccio's *di sopra* is too colorless to have suggested Chaucer's *in a tour* while *fastigia templi*, the temple's dome or "vaulted roof" (Lewis), with its embossed *captae gentes*, if painted on the wall of Chaucer's temple, would be suitably described by *conquest, depeynted in a tour*. *Caelataque ferro*, though it is evidently not to be taken with *captae gentes* and though *ferro* does not here mean *sword*, is probably the link of association that accounts for the appearance of Damocles' sword in Chaucer's next line. Chaucer's ms. of Statius may have read *caelataque ferro*.

"Ne how the goddes ronnen up and doun,  
 Disherited of hir *habitacioun*,  
 In which they woneden in rest and pees,  
 Nymphes, Faunes, and Amadrides" (A. 2925-28).

*Theb.* vi. 103: "Linguunt flentes *dilecta locorum*

Otia cana Pales Silvanusque arbiter umbrae  
 Semideumque pecus, migrantibus adgemit illis  
 Silva, nec amplexae dimittunt robora *Nymphae*."

The idea that the habitation of the gods is one of *rest and pees* is due to Statius, not to Boccaccio.

"Ne how the fyr was couched first with stree . . .  
 And than with cloth of gold and with perrye" (2933 f.).

*Theb.* vi. 61: "*Summa crepant auro*, Tyrioque attolitur ostro  
 / molle supercilium, *teretes hoc undique gemmae / irradiant*."  
*Perrye* is Chaucer's translation of *gemmae*. There is no corresponding term in the *Teseide* (xi. 27-29) whence Chaucer took the other features of his description of Arcita's pyre.

### Group B.

*Man of Lawe.* Chaucer mentions the strife of Thebes as

one of the events that were written many years beforehand in the stars:

"In sterres, many a winter ther-biforn  
Was writen the deeth of Ector, Achilles,  
Of Pompey, Iulius, er they were born;  
The stryf of Thebes" (B. 197-200).

Marginal quotations in the mss. show that this passage was taken from the *Megacosmos* of Bernardus Silvestris.<sup>1</sup>

When Constance, daughter of the Emperor of Rome, left home to go to Syria and become the bride of the Sultan, there was "tendre weping" such as was not heard at the burning of Troy, nor at "Thebes the citee" (B. 289). There was great sorrow at Thebes on several notable occasions. When the relatives of the 49 warriors slain by Tydeus went out to bury their dead (*Theb.* III. 120),

"Fervet iter gemitu et plangoribus arva reclamant.  
Ut vero infames scopulos silvamque nefandam  
Perventum, ceu nulla prius lamenta nec atri  
Manassent imbres, sic ore miserrimus uno  
Exoritur fragor, aspectuque accensa cruento  
Turba furit: stat sanguineo discussus amictu  
Luctus atrox caesoque invitat pectore matres."

The aged Aletes, who tried to comfort the mourners, said:

"*Sed nec veteris cum regia Cadmi Fulmineum in cinerem monitis Iunonis iniquae Consedit, neque funerea cum laude potitus Infelix Athamas trepido de monte veniret, Semianimem heu laeto referens clamore Learchum, Hic gemitus Thebis . . . Una dies similis fato specieque malorum Aequa fuit, qua magniloquos luit impia flatus Tantalus, innumeris cum circumfusa ruinis Corpora tot raperet terra, tot quaereret ignes*" (III. 183 ff.).

<sup>1</sup> See Skeat's note. The value of these marginal glosses has been shown to be considerable. For this reason, the present explanation of Trophee (B. 3307) as Guido (Hamilton, *Chaucer's Indebtedness to Guido delle Colonne*, pp. 55, 150; Skeat, II. p. lvi) is not wholly satisfactory. This crux should stand until someone explains how Trophee is *ille vates Chaldeorum* as he is called in mss. Ellesmere, Hengwrt.

When Eteocles and Polynices are about to begin their duel, "Prominet excelsis vulgus miserabile tectis, Cuncta madent lacrimis et ab omni plangitur arce" (XI. 416 f.).

When the Thebans mourned their slain after the siege was raised, they wept all day and all night (XII. 44 ff.).

There was 'tendre weping' when Argia and Antigone found the body of Polynices (XII. 317, 385).

### *Group D.*

*Wyf of Bathe.* The 'Ioly clerk Iankin' had a book which was a compilation of stories of 'wikked wyves,' and took great delight in reading from it for the edification of his spouse, the Wife of Bath. One of these stories was that of Eriphyle's betrayal of Amphiaraus (D. 740 ff.):

"He tolde me eek for what occasioun  
Amphiorax at Thebes loste his lyf;  
Myn housbond hadde a legende of his wyf,  
Eriphilem, that for an ouche of gold  
Hath prively un-to the Grekes told  
Wher that hir housbonde hidde him in place,  
For which he hadde at Thebes sory grace."

On the margin of the Ellesmere ms., there is a quotation from Jerome, *Contra Iovin.* I. 52, "Tertia (Eriphyle dicitur) prodixit Amphiar[um], et salutem viri monile aureum praetulisse." If the marginal note was Chaucer's own, then he has supplemented this brief statement; for from it he could not have known that Eriphyle's betrayal of her husband consisted in telling the Greeks his place of concealment, nor could he have known that her betrayal resulted in the seer's death at Thebes.

By observing a battle between seven eagles and a flock of swans, Amphiaraus divined the events of the war, and foresaw his own death. Hence he was unwilling to reveal the future to Adrastus, and concealed himself for twelve days (*Theb.* III. 570, cf. 623). But Eriphyle coveted Harmonia's necklace then in possession of Argia; and betrayed her husband that she might secure the direful gold. Thus he was compelled



to join the Theban expedition and meet his fate (iv. 190 ff.): "*nec coniugis absunt / insidiae, vetitoque domus iam fulgurat auro. / Hoc aurum vati fata exitiale monebant / Argolico: scit et ipsa nefas, sed perfida coniunx / dona viro mutare velit, spoliisque excellere cultu.*" Cf. 209 ff.: "Nunc induat illa (Eriphyle) / quae petit et bellante potest gaudere marito" / Sic Eriphylaeos aurum fatale penates / inrupit scelerumque ingentia semina movit, / et grave Tisiphone risit gavisa futuris."

Amphiaraus' last request of Apollo, made just before his plunge into Tartarus, was that his treacherous wife might be punished (*Theb.* vii. 785): "Nunc voce suprema, / si qua recessuro debetur gratia vati, / deceptum tibi, Phoebe, larem poenasque nefandae / coniugis et pulchrum nati commendo furorem." Cf. the seer's words to Pluto (viii. 101): "Nec alma / sic merui de luce rapi; scit iudicis urna / Dictaei verumque potest deprendere Minos. / Coniugis insidiis et iniquo venditus auro / Argolicas acies . . . non ignarus ini"; cf. 120 "Si quando nefanda / huc aderit coniunx, illi funesta reserva / supplicia: illa tua, rector bone, dignior ira." Cf. *Theb.* xii. 123; Ovid *M.* viii. 316. As a token of her acceptance of his love, Emilia gave to Palemon "una cintura simiglianti / A quella per la qual si seppe il loco Dove Anfiaro era latitante" (*Tes.* ix. 71).

### Group E.

*Marchantes Tale.* At the wedding of January and May the music was such

"That Orpheus, ne of Thebes Amphioun,  
Ne maden never swich a melody" (E. 1716 f.).

Statius frequently refers to the exquisite melody by which Amphion constrained rocks from the surrounding mountains to move into place and form the walls of Thebes. In his invocation, he decides to pass over the beginnings of Theban history, and not to tell "quo carmine muris / iusserit Amphion Tyrios accedere montes" (i. 9).

When the Thebans were rejoicing at the death of the Argive seer, they boastfully sang of the deeds of their ancestors, of Amphion who moved rocks and cliffs to the music of the Tyrian lyre (VIII. 232 f.). Cf. x. 873 ff., and the note to A. 1545 ff. See *H.* 116 below.

"At every cours than cam loud minstraleye,  
That never trumped Ioab for to here,  
Ne he, Theodomus, yet half so clere,  
At Thebes, whan the citee was in doute" (E. 1718-21).

Chaucer evidently had in mind some memorable occasion on which Thiodamus blew his trumpet at Thebes. Thiodamus' first action after his election as successor of Amphiaraus was to offer sacrifice to Mother Earth (*Theb.* VIII. 303 ff.). At the end of his invocation (342), a great blare of trumpets was heard from Thebes, and the Thebans rushed forth from the seven gates of the city to renew the battle. Skeat (note to *H. F.* 1245) is wrong in thinking that the trumpets were blown by the besieging host; cf. *contra* (342). This then is not the occasion to which Chaucer refers. See p. 37.

### *Group H.*

#### *Maunciples Tale.*

"Whan Phebus dwelled here in this erthe adoun,  
As olde bokes maken mencion,  
He was the moste lusty bachiler  
In al this world, and eek the beste archer" (105-8).

Part of Apollo's life on earth was spent in the service of Admetus (*Theb.* VI. 353): "Peliacis hic cum famularer in arvis / (sic Iovis imperia et nigrae voluere Sorores), / tura dabat famulo nec me sentire minorem / ausus." These are the words of Apollo when deliberating whether to favor Admetus or Amphiaraus in the chariot race at the funeral games of Archemorus.

“Pleyen he coude on every minstraleye,  
And singen, that it was a melodye,  
To heren of his clere vois the soun.  
Certes *the king of Thebes, Amphioun,*  
*That with his singing walled that citee,*  
Coude never singen half so wel as he” (113-18).

Cf. the note to E. 1716 above.

Amphion as *king* of Thebes is probably due to a mediæval sources. Cf. Boccaccio, *De Geneol. Deor.* v. 30 “De Amphione rege Thebarum.”



## II. INDIRECT INFLUENCE OF THE THEBAID.

## A. THROUGH BOCCACCIO.

Both the *Filostrato* and the *Teseide* are media of Statius' influence upon Chaucer.

1. *Il Filostrato*. Only the *Troilus*, which is an adaptation of the *Filostrato*, comes under consideration here.

"For if my fader Tydeus" he seyde,  
 "Y-lived hadde, I hadde been, er this,  
 Of Calidoun and Arge a king, Criseyde!  
 And so hope I that I shal yet, y-wis.  
 But he was slayn, allas! the more harm is,  
 Unhappily at Thebes al to rathe,  
 Polymites and many a man to scathe" (v. 932-38).

These words of sudden Diomed to Criseyde are borrowed from the *Filostr.* vi. 24:

"Se 'l padre mio Tedeo fosse vissuto,  
 Com'el fu morto a Tebe combattendo,  
 Di Calidonia e d' Argo saria suto  
 Re, siccom' io ancora essere intendo."

Chaucer's method of combining sources is here illustrated. His familiarity with Boccaccio's sources enabled him to add,

"Polymites and many a man to scathe."

The death of Tydeus was a heavy blow to the cause of Polynices; and deprived the allied hosts of their doughtiest chieftain. When Tydeus was begging that the head of Melanippus be brought, he addressed Capaneus thus (viii. 744): "Argolicae Capaneu iam maxime turmae." Polynices thus begins his lament over the lifeless body of his friend (ix. 49): "Hasne tibi, armorum spes O suprema meorum, / Oenide, grates, haec praemia digna rependi?"

"And of this lord (Meleagre) descended Tydeus  
By ligne, or elles olde bokes lye" (v. 1480 f.).  
"This ilke boor bitokneth Diomede,  
Tydeus sone, that doun descended is  
Fro Meleagre, that made the boor to blede" (v. 1513-15).

In making Tydeus a lineal descendant of Meleager, Chaucer has departed from both Statius and Ovid. Tydeus, threatening Polynices at the court of Adrastus, says (I. 461): "aut hodie spoliis gavisus abibis, / quisquis es, his, aut *me si non effectus oborto / sanguis hebet luctu, magni de stirpe creatum / Oeneos et Marti non degenerare paterno / accipies.*" Cf. "Oenides" (VIII. 538); Ovid *M.* VIII. 414, 486. According to classical mythology, Tydeus was the half brother of Meleager. In Homer's account of the Calydonian hunt (*Il.* ix. 529-99), Meleager is represented as the son of Œneus and Althaea. After the tragic death of Meleager and his mother, Œneus married Periboea, who bore him Tydeus (*Hyg. Fab.* 69). When Tydeus fled to Argos because of his crime (*Theb.* I. 402), Adrastus welcomed him as one of his sons-in-law (*Theb.* I. 495, II. 152); and gave him in marriage Deipyle by whom he became the father of Diomedes.<sup>1</sup>

The source of Chaucer's lines is Boccaccio (*Filostr.* VII. 27):

"Questo cinghiar ch'io vidi è Diomede  
Perocchè l'avolo uccise il cinghiaro  
Di Calidonia, se si può dar fede  
A' nostri antichi, e sempre poi portarono  
Per sopransegna siccome si vede  
I discendenti il porco."

The boar's spoils were the insignia of the house of Calydon, not worn by the descendants of Meleager, but by the representative of the royal family; cf. *Theb.* I. 488: "Terribiles contra / saetis ac dente recurvo / Tydea per latos humeros ambire laborant / exuviae, Calydonis honos." Cf. also *Theb.* VI. 810 f. and VIII. 705 f. In the oracle of Apollo concerning the sons-in-law of Adrastus, Tydeus was prefigured by a wild boar (*Theb.* I. 395):—

<sup>1</sup> See Roscher's *Lexikon* under *Oineus, Meleagros, Diomedes*.

"Cui Phoebus generos (monstrum exitiabile dictu!  
Mox adaperta fides) fato ducente canebat  
Saetigerumque suem et fulvum adventare leonem."

Cf. *Troil.* v. 1449.

Chaucer's words "or elles olde bokes lye" are his translation of "Se si può dar fede / a' nostri antichi." He has here followed Boccaccio somewhat blindly, taking *avolo* in the sense of ancestor in direct succession, when either of his familiar authors, Statius or Ovid, would have set him right. His error is the more surprising since he probably consulted *Met.* viii. 260 ff. for his story of the Calydonian chase. Skeat compares *Troil.* v. 1469 with *Met.* viii. 282; cf. further v. 1470 with *Met.* viii. 290 f.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. LA TESEIDE.

### *Troilus and Criseyde.*

"O cruel god, O dispitouse Marte!" (II. 435). Cf. *Tes.* I. 58: "O fiero Marte, O dispettoso Iddio!"; *Theb.* ix. 785 "ferus . . . Mavors"; Ovid, *Heroid.* vii. 160.

"The golden-tressed Phebus heighe on-lofte.  
Thryës hadde alle with his bemes shene  
The snowes molte, and Zephirus as ofte  
Y-brought agein the tendre leves grene" (v. 8-11).

Chaucer's stately lines are apparently the result of combining sources:—

"*Il sole avea due volte dissolute  
Le nevi agli alti poggi, ed altrettante  
Zefiro avea le frondi rendute  
Ed i be' fiore alle spogliate piante*" . . . (*Tes.* II. 1).

<sup>1</sup> The *Roman de Thèbes* states the relationship correctly:

"Li proz chevaliers Tydeüs  
Qui esteit fiz Oeneüs" (667 f.);  
"De Calidone eissi l'autr'ier:  
Fiz sué Oeneüs le rei" (836 f.).

Cf. Ovid, *Heroid.* ix. 151-57 and Hyg. *Fab.* xiv.



Boccaccio no doubt imitated Statius *Theb.* iv. 1:—"Tertius horrentum Zephris laxaverat annum Phoebus et angusto coge-  
bat limite vernum Longius ire diem." *Phebus* and *thryës* may  
be due to Statius. The fostering influence of Zephyrus upon  
foliage and flower is again referred to by Statius, *Theb.* vii. 223:

"Ut cum sole malo tristique rosaria pendent  
Usta Noto, si clara dies Zephrique refecit  
Aura polum, redit omnis honos, emissaque lucent  
Germina et informes ornat sua gloria virgas."

Cf. *C. T.*, A. 5:

"Whan Zephirus eek with his swete breeth  
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth  
The tendre croppes" . . . .

and Boethius i. *Metre* v.:—"Thy might atempreth the vari-  
aunts sesons of the yere; so that Zephirus the deboneir wind  
bringeth ayein in the first somer sesoun, the leves that the wind  
that highte Boreas hath reft away in autumpne"; also *L. of G.*  
*W.* 171 (B), *B. D.* 402 f. with Skeat's note. Cf. also Pe-  
trarch, Sonnet XLII:

"Zefiro torna, e 'l bel tempo rimena  
E i fiori e l'erbe, sua dolce famiglia,  
E garrir Progne, e pianger Filomena;  
E primavera candida e vermiglia,"

and note that these lines are the source of *Troil.* ii. 50 f.  
and 64 f.

The apotheosis of Troilus (v. 1807-27) is adapted from  
Boccaccio's account of the apotheosis of Arcita (*Tes.* xi. 1-3),  
as Ward points out.<sup>1</sup> Boccaccio doubtless took the suggestion  
from Statius *Theb.* x. 780, where we are told that Menoeceus'  
valor in sacrificing his life for the welfare of Thebes gained him  
a place among the stars:—

"Ast illum amplexae Pietas Virtusque ferebant  
Leniter ad terras corpus; nam spiritus olim  
Ante Iovem et summis apicem sibi poscit in astris."

<sup>1</sup> *Six-Text Print*, *C. T.*, Kn. Ta. 2809.

But Boccaccio, at this suggestion, turned to a more complete description of an apotheosis, viz., that of Pompey as given by Lucan (*De Bel. Civ.* ix. 1-14).<sup>1</sup>

### *Legend of Good Women.*

Chaucer's devotion to the daisy caused him to rise early on the first of May

"For to ben at the resureccioun  
Of this flour, whan that it shuld unclose  
Agayn *the sonne*, that roos as rede as rose,  
*That in the brest was of the beste that day,*  
*That Agenores doghter ladde away*" (110-14 B).

This striking idea with the phraseology that embodies it is due to Boccaccio (*Tes.* III. 5):

"*Febo salendo con li suoi cavalli  
Del ciel teneva l'unile ainmale  
Che Europa portò senza intervalli  
Là dove il nome dimora avale.*"

Cf. *Troil.* III. 722:

"O Iove eek, for the love of faire Europe  
The which in forme of bole away thou fette";

*Theb.* VIII. 229: "Hi mare Sidonium manibusque attrita  
Tonantis Cornua et ingenti sulcatum Nerea tauro." IX. 334:  
"Sidonis hic blandi per candida terga iuveni / iam segura  
maris, teneris iam cornua palmis / non tenet, extremis adludunt  
aequora plantis."

### *Parlement of Foules.*

Professor Lounsbury<sup>2</sup> showed that Chaucer's stanza on occupations in dreams (ll. 99-105) was borrowed from Claudian, *In Sextum Consulatum Honorii Augusti, Praef.* ll. 3-10.

<sup>1</sup>See Tyrwhitt (*Canterbury Tales*, I. p. 120) and Skeat (III. p. 394).

<sup>2</sup>*Studies in Chaucer* II. 256.

It may be of interest to note that Petronius wrote a poem on the same subject (Fragm. xxx.). In it, the warrior, lawyer, miser, sailor, and lover are said to dream about what engages their thought in their waking hours. See Skeat's note for references to other treatments of this theme.

"The bilder *ook* and eek the hardy *asshe*;  
The piler *elm*, the cofre unto careyne;  
The boxtree piper; *holm* to whippes lasshe;  
The sayling *firr*; the *cipres*, deth to pleyne;  
The sheter *ew* the aspe for shaftes pleyne  
The olyve of pees, and eek the drunken vyne,  
The victor palm, the laurer to devyne" (176-82).

Such is Chaucer's catalogue of the trees that grew in the park into which Scipio Africanus conducted him. If this list of trees, like that in the *Knight's Tale* (A. 2921), was suggested by the *Teseide* (xi. 22-24), then indirect influence of Statius may be claimed; for Boccaccio's list was suggested by the Statius (*Theb.* vi. 91-99), who names 12 of the 18 varieties of trees mentioned by Boccaccio, and 7 of those which reappear in Chaucer's list: *ook*, *asshe*, *elm*, *holm*, *firr*, *cipres*, *ew*. See the note to A. 2919. As Skeat observes, Chaucer extended his list by referring to the *Roman de la Rose* 1338-68. However, only *loriers*, laurels, *oliviers*, olives, and *trembles*, aspens were necessarily taken from that source. For references to other tree-lists, see Skeat's note.

Chaucer gives *ook* the epithet *bilder*. Statius probably had in mind the durable quality which makes oak desirable for building purposes, when he wrote (*Theb.* vi. 96) "*Situ non expugnabile robur.*"

"The *elm* is called *piler*, perhaps because it is planted as a pillar of support to the vine," says Bell. Cf. *Theb.* vi. 99 "*nec inhospita vitibus ulmus.*" *Tes.* xi. 24 "*l' olmo chi di viti s'innamora.*" Skeat compares Ovid *M.* x. 100 "*amictae vitibus ulmi.*" Claudian, *De Rapt. Pros.* ii. 111 "*pampinus induit ulmos.*"

The *sayling firr* is called *audax abies* by Statius (*Theb.* vi.



971) by transference of epithet in accordance with the classic commonplace that sailors are avaricious violators of nature's law: Hor. *Od.* i. 3, 21 ff., Ovid *M.* i. 94 "nondum caesa suis, peregrinum ut viseret orbem, montibus in liquidas pinus descenderat undas." Cf. Chaucer's rendering of these lines in *The Former Age* l. 21 f.:—

"No ship yit karf the waves grene and blewe,  
No merchaunt yit ne fette outlandish ware."

In support of Chaucer's epithet, compare further Claudian *De Rapt. Pros.* ii. 107 "apta fretis abies," Verg. *Georg.* ii. 68 "nascitur et casus abies visura marinos," *Aen.* v. 663 "pictas abiete puppis."

*The cipres deth to pleyne*; Archemorus' bier was appropriately made of cypress branches (*Theb.* vi. 54). "Tristibus interea ramis teneraque cupresso / damnatus flammae torus et puerile feretrum / texitur." So Claudian, *De Rapt. Pros.* ii. 108 "tumulos tectura cupressus."

*The olyve of pees*; cf. Stat. *Theb.* ii. 389 "Ramus manifestat olivae legatum"; also ii. 478.

*The victor palm*; cf. *Tes.* xi. 24 "d'ogni vincitore / premio la palma," taken, as Skeat correctly observes, from Ov. *M.* x. 102 "victoris praemia palmae."<sup>1</sup> Tydeus won the palm in a wrestling-match at the funeral games of Archemorus (*Theb.* vi. 880).

### *Anelida and Arcite.*

This fragment, which seems to be the result of an unsuccessful experiment was, as Skeat observes (i. p. 529), probably written before the *Knight's Tale*. Theseus, who is here left riding on and on without ever reaching Athens (cf. l. 45), is

<sup>1</sup>It will perhaps not be without interest to note in passing that Boccaccio's source for representing Pleasure as the daughter of Cupid (*Tes.* vii. 54) was Apuleius, who was one of his favorite authors. Cf. *Met.* vi. 24: "See rite Psyche convenit in manum cupidinis; et nascitur illis maturo partu filia quam Voluptatem nominamus." See Skeat's note to *Parl.* 214.

rescued in the *K. T.*, and becomes the champion of the Grecian women against the tyrant Creon. Chaucer follows Statius much more closely here than in the *K. T.*, and, as some phrases found here are repeated there (cf. l. 38 with A. 972), it is highly probable that he there adapted the introductory lines (22-70) of the *Anelida*, which describe the same situation. In each case the same lines of Statius (*Theb.* XII. 519 ff.) head the story.

The story proper (l. 71 ff.) is so mediæval and Chaucerian in tone that one need hardly look for an original. That the poem had a classical source is very improbable. At any rate l. 21,

"First folow I Stace and after him Corinne," refers only to the introductory part of the story (i. e., ll. 22-70). As the trend of research has been towards showing that Chaucer gives his references in good faith, we may accept his statement literally. Now, since he has not deceived us in regard to his first author *Stace*, whom he follows in lines 22-46, why should we not believe that *after him* he follows *Corinne*? Lines 50-70 are copied from Boccaccio's outline of the *Thebaid* which Chaucer found very convenient in leading up to the point of departure for his story. I therefore suggest that Chaucer has twice<sup>1</sup> synonymized Boccaccio, in this instance by *Corinne* (cf. It. *corina*, wry face).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On the synonym *Lollius*, see p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Another possibility, though it seems to me a very slight one, is that *after him* means 'through him as authority.' In that case *Corinne* would be a remote reference to Korina, the famous Greek poetess, contemporary of Pindar. But it is very doubtful whether Chaucer, or any authority that could have come into his hands, could have gained the knowledge implied in order to make apt a reference to the Tanagran poetess, viz., that she wrote on the *Seven Against Thebes*. Our sole source of this knowledge is Apollonios Dyscolos, who in his *Περὶ ἀντωνυμίας* quotes from *Κόριννα ἐπὶ ἐπὶ Θήβας* (Bergk: *Poetae Lyrici Graeci*. Lipsiae, 1882, p. 544).

Though she was famous enough to be called *δῖα Κόριννα* and inspired Pindar (*Vita Metrica ex Eustathii Vita Pind. Excerpta*, l. 9 f. W. Christ: *Pindari Carmina Prolegomenis et Commentariis Instructa*. Lipsiae, 1896, p. cii.) and overcame him in song (Pausanias, ix. 22, 3) and was numbered with the nine poetesses that constituted the human counterpart of the

Filippo Villani, a contemporary and for a number of years a fellow-townsmen of Boccaccio, wrote in Latin the lives of the famous men of Florence. He describes the poet thus: "*Statu-  
rae fuit poeta pinguiculae sed procerae, rotunda facie, naso  
supra nares paululum depresso; labiis turgentibus aliquantu-  
lum, venuste tamen lineatis, centro in mento, dum rideret,  
decore defosso, iocundus et hylaris aspectu, toto sermone facetus  
et comus,*<sup>1</sup> [et] qui contionibus delectaretur. Amicos multos  
sua sibi diligentia comparavit, neminem tamen qui suae indi-  
gentiae subveniret" (Solerti, *Storia Letteraria d'Italia*, Milano  
1904, p. 675).

Boccaccio in his *Labirynthus Amoris* describes himself, says Papirio Masson (Solerti p. 733): "primum ait se non esse  
exigua corporis statura, vultu pulchro et eleganti, membris  
optime compositis, barba florida, oculis aspicienti gratissimis."

These descriptions of Boccaccio's personal appearance, so far from alluding to the characteristic wry mouth that must have fastened the nickname Boccaccio upon an ancestor of the poet, indicate that he was rather a handsome man, and that his lips had a pleasing curve. But although the characteristic feature was not transmitted, it is probable that Chaucer understood the import of the name *Boccaccio* and that he has here used an exact and euphonious synonym.<sup>2</sup>

nine muses (Antipater, *Anthologia Palatina*, ix. 26), still the essential bit of information that she wrote on the siege of Thebes was by no means widely known.

See Herbert Weir Smyth: *Greek Melic Poets*, London, 1900, p. xx and p. 337 f. W. Christ: *Gesch. der Griechischen Lit.*, 3te Aufl., München, 1898, pp. 153, 170 (Müller, *Handbuch*). Pauly, *Real-Encycl.* s. v. *Corinna*.

<sup>1</sup> *Sic.*

<sup>2</sup> According to Guiseppe Betussi (1520-1573), Boccaccio's father had no cognomen except that which he took from his native place, Certaldo, a castle of Toscana, situated on a high hill near the river Elsa. Hence he called himself Boccaccio da Certaldo. The poet, dropping the local *da Certaldo*, took his father's first name as his own surname (Solerti, p. 703). However, cf. *Am. Vis.* I, "Giovanni di Boccaccio da Certaldo."

For the attempted explanationss of *Corinne*, see Tyrwhitt's Glossary s. v. *Corinne* (*Canterbury Tales*, vol. v.), Lounsbury (*Studies in Chaucer*, II. p. 403 f.), Constans (*Roman de Thèbes* II. p. clvii, n. 2), Skeat's note to l. 21, Hamilton (p. 144).



"This olde storie, in Latin which I finde,  
Of quene Anelida and false Arcite" (10 f.).

These lines refer only to the introductory portion of the story (ll. 22-70), and more especially to that portion borrowed from Statius (ll. 22-46). However, lines 50-70 give the outline of the old story (the *Thebaid*) up to the point mentioned l. 22 ff.

Though Chaucer copies Boccaccio's words when he speaks of an *olde storie in Latin* (una storia antica . . . latino autor), he may be credited with knowing at first hand that Boccaccio's outline is correct. Skeat does Chaucer injustice in his note to lines 8-10; for Chaucer did find the story (ll. 22-70) in Latin. He only chose to mention it in Boccaccio's words. This is the story which he summarizes immediately after his proem, availing himself of Boccaccio's partial summary.

In his prefatory letter *alla Fiametta* Boccaccio speaks of the story of the *Teseide* as *antichissima*: "*Trovata una antichissima storia, e al più delle gente non manifesta, bella sì per la materia della quale parla, che è d'amore, e sì per coloro de' quali dice che nobili giovani furono e di real sangue discesi, in latino volgare e in rima acciocchè più dilettaſſe, e massimamente a voi, che già con summo titolo le mie rime esaltaste, con quella sollecitudine che conceduta mi fu dell' altre più gravi, desiderando di piacervi, ho ridotta.*" He implies (*Tes.* i. 2) that this "very old" story which he renders into Italian was originally in Latin: "*una storia antica, / tanto negli anni riposta e nascosa, / che latino autor non par ne dica, / per quel ch'i' senta, in libro alcuna cosa.*" Tyrwhitt (*Introductory Discourse*, p. 121 of *Canterbury Tales*, vol. II.), commenting on the statement of the preface quoted above, shrewdly observes that "the Story of Palemone and Arcita, as related by Boccace, could not be *very ancient*"; but thinks it hardly credible that the story was of the poet's own invention. I believe that Boccaccio is referring a love story of his own invention to the ancient period of the *Thebaid* which furnished him with his setting and which he kept before him from first to last while composing. The musty Latin ms. which he compliments so

highly (che latino autor non par ne dica) is probably the *Thebaid* itself. Anyone who compares the *Thebaid* and the *Teseide* will be likely to hold the same view; for Boccaccio rimes the *Thebaid* in many passages of the *Teseide* which were not used by Chaucer and which therefore are not presented in this study. In fact, Boccaccio in his mediæval continuation of the *Thebaid* has found his plot in the one romantic episode not fully developed by Statius, viz., in the conquest of Hippolyte. He discovers among the wounded at Thebes two knights of the Cadmian line, and modeling them after Eteocles and Polynices makes them fight for the kingdom of a lady's heart. As Hippolyte belongs to Theseus, the invention of her Amazon sister Emilia is an obvious step.

Both Chaucer and Boccaccio probably mean that this old story is the foundation upon which they build. That newer part of Chaucer's story (l. 71 ff.) which is thus introduced in a *slye wey* (l. 48) may possibly contain in disguise the history of characters who lived in his own day.<sup>1</sup>

"Thou ferse god of armes, Mars the rede,  
That in the frosty country called Trace  
Within thy grisly temple ful of drede  
Honoured art as patroun of that place,  
With thy Bellona, Pallas ful of grace,  
Be present, and my song continue and gye!  
At my beginning thus to thee I crye" (1-7).

<sup>1</sup> Anelida, queen of Ermony, whose residence in Thebes would seem rather strange if she were Queen of Armenia, may be the queen of Harmonia, i. e., the queen into whose possession has come that baleful heirloom of the Cadmian line, the brooch of Thebes. The possession of Harmonia's necklace would motivate the queen's misfortune, cf. *Compleynt of Mars* (l. 259 f.);—

"But be that wroughte hit enfortuned hit so,  
That every wight that had hit shuld have wo."

Variant readings for Harmoniae at *Theb.* II. 267, where the baneful necklace is described are: *Ermiones*, found in the Gudianus 52, a ms. of the 14th century; and *Armonie*, Gudianus 54. See Kohlmann's critical apparatus. Gower (*C. A.*, v. 1397) calls the daughter of Mars and Venus *Armene*. It is not impossible that *Anelida* is derived from *anulata*.

Cf. C. T., A. 1969-74 and 2373-76 and the parallels there cited, pp. 193, 215; also:—

"Siate presenti, O Marte rubicondo,  
Nelle tue armi rigido e feroce" (Tes. I. 3).

*Ferox* as an epithet of Mars does not appear in the *Thebaid*; but cf. *Marte feroci*, Ovid *M.* 13, 11. Boccaccio invokes Mars, Venus, Cupid, and the Muses, but Chaucer confines his invocation to deities of war. Statius mentions these three deities together (*Theb.* xi. 413): "Restinxit Bellona faces, longeque paventes / Mars rapuit currus, et Gorgone cruda virago / abstinit." Bellona showed her flaming torch and hurled her spear as a signal that the appointed time of war had come (*Theb.* iv. 5 ff.). Jove considered Pallas capable of conducting the Theban war; and, if Mars had refused to obey his commands, would have entrusted it to her charge (*Theb.* vii. 33). She was the patron deity of warlike Tydeus, who called her *diva ferox, bellipotens* (*Theb.* ii. 715).

Skcat (note l. 2) says Chaucer seems to confuse Pallas and Bellona as Boccaccio does in his *De Genealogia Deorum*. However, it may be said on Chaucer's behalf that the omission of *and* between proper names that are not in apposition occurs elsewhere in his works.<sup>1</sup>

Pallas, not Bellona, is *ful of grace*. Bellona is *atra* (*Theb.* vii. 72) and *sanguinea* (*Theb.* ix. 297). Pallas is called *decora* by Diacont. viii. 36; and Statius, when he wishes to convey some idea of the great beauty of Argia and Deipyle, compares them to Pallas and Diana, I. 535 f.; II. 236 ff.

<sup>1</sup> Boccaccio tries to distinguish between several Minervas, one of whom is Bellona (*De Geneal. Deor.* v. 48): "Minerva, non ea cui cognomen Tritonia fuit, Iovis Secundi fuit filia, ut scribit Tullius de naturis deorum. Quam idem Tullius inventricem asserit fuisse bellorum atque principem, et ob id a nonnullis Bellona appellata est et soror Martis et auriga, ut testari Statius videt dicens: Regit atra iugales Sanguinea Bellona manu longaue fatigat Cuspide." Cf. *Theb.* vii. 72.

For an account of the Minerva (Tritonia) who sprang from the head of Jove, cf. *Gen. Deor.* II. 3.



When Chaucer wrote *thy Bellona*, he may have had in mind Statius' lines immediately following the description of the temple,<sup>1</sup> where Bellona is mentioned as Mars' charioteer (vii. 69): "Mars himself glorious in Hyrcanian blood, approaches in his chariot; and dyes the plain with dripping gore. Weeping hosts bearing spoils follow in his train. The forests and the deep snow make way. Malevolent Bellona guides the steeds with bloody hand and goads them with her long spear."

"For hit ful depe is sonken in my minde,  
With pitous herte in English for tendyte  
This olde storie, in Latin which I finde,  
Of quene Anelida and fals Arcite,  
That elde, which that al can frete and byte,  
As hit hath freten mony a noble storie,  
Hath nigh devoured out of our memorie" (8-14).

<sup>1</sup> A translation of Statius' description of Mars' *grisly* temple is here attempted. But those who would fully appreciate the horrors of his abode should turn to the original (*Theb.* vii. 34 ff.), which so well justifies Chaucer's epithet.

Jove angered at the delay of hostilities caused by the funeral games of Archemorus, sent Mercury to reprove Mars for neglect of duty. Bearing the message, Cyllenius was approaching the country of the Thracians. "Him, gliding over the regions of the north, the incessant tempest of that zone, and hosts of clouds blown across the sky, and fierce blasts of the north wind drive now this way, now that. Hailstones rattle on his golden palla; his Arcadian hat affords him scant protection. Here the temple of Mars (a horrible sight) appears in a forest bare of leaves at the foot of towering Haemus. A thousand whirling gusts rage around the wild abode. Its walls are built of iron; its threshold is fitted with doors of polished iron; iron columns support the roof. The light of Phoebus saddens into gloom before it settles there; even light from a sky overcast fears the gloomy seat; its baleful gleam darkens the stars.

"The guards are worthy of the temple. From its doors leap forth furious Attack, blind Crime, blood-flushed Wrath, and pallid Fear. Within lurks Ambush with sword concealed. Discord there offers swords for two. The court re-echoes with countless threats; in its midst stands Valor exceeding sad. Gloating Rage and panoplied Death with blood-stained face are seated there. Only blood shed in war is sacrificed at the altars where burns fire snatched from burning cities. Round about upon the walls hang spoils from many lands; and captured nations grace the temple's dome. Embossed in iron are falling city gates. Here warships sail; there chariots speed along crushing skulls beneath their wheels. One could almost hear the groans. There, too, was seen portrayed every form of violence and

This stanza, which is based on the *Teseide* i. 2, can not be paralleled from the *Thebaid*; but should be quoted under the heading of indirect influence; for Chaucer would not have adapted Boccaccio's statement had he not been familiar with the old story to which Boccaccio refers. Besides, as noted above, Chaucer gives the reference new value by supplementing Boccaccio's outline of the *Thebaid*.

"E' m' è venuta voglia con pietosa  
Rima di scriver una storia antica,  
Tanto negli anni riposta e nascosa  
Che latino autor non par ne dica,  
Per quel ch' i' senta, in libro alcuna cosa" (*Tes.* i. 2).

Similarly in the *Legend of Good Women* (421), Chaucer speaks of the story of *Palamon and Arcite of Thebes* as being little known. There, too, he is referring not to his early translation of the *Teseide*, nor to the *Teseide* itself, but to the story to which Boccaccio refers in *Tes.* i. 2. This story is probably the *Thebaid* itself, the foundation upon which Boccaccio built, not a later story containing all the essentials of the *Teseide*, as Skeat thinks. See his note *l. c.*

"Be favorable eek, thou Polymnia,  
On Parnaso that, with thy sustres glade,  
By Elicon, not fer from Cirrea,  
Singest with vois memorial in the shade,  
Under the laurer which that may not fade,  
And do that I my ship to haven winne" (15-20).

"O Sorelle Castalie, che nel monte  
Elicon contenta dimorate  
D'intorno al sacro gorgoneo fonte,  
Sottesso l'ombra delle frondi amate  
Da Febo, delle quali ancor la fronte  
Spero d'ornarmi sol che 'l concediate,  
Le sante orecchie a' miei preghi porgete,  
E quegli udite come voi dovete" (*Tes.* i. 1).

every kind of wound. On all sides, the god himself is imaged, always with fierce mein, such as Mulciber had portrayed him before the adulterer had been revealed by Phoebus' rays and had expiated his shameful amour when taken in the brazen net."

Chaucer seems to have transferred to Polyhymnia the province of history which belongs peculiarly to Clio. The form Polymnia (Πολύμνια) is found only in *Anth. Lat.* 276, 7 and *Auson. Idyll.* xx. 7. Latin poets elsewhere use the longer form of the name. In the passages referred to Polymnia is the patroness of pantomimes. See Todd's *De Musis*, p. 41.

The comparison between writing a poem and making a voyage is one frequently drawn, cf. *Troil.* II. 1. Winning the harbor is a metaphor for successfully completing the poem. This comparison is found in the *Thebaid* (xii. 809) and also in the last stanza of the *Teseide*. It is impossible to say from which author Chaucer took it. The figure is more elaborate in Boccaccio (*Tes.* xii. 86):—

“E perocchè li porti disiati  
In sì lungo pileggio ne tegnamo,  
Da varii venti in essi trasportati,  
Le vaghe nostre vele qui caliamo,  
E li ghirlande e i doni meritate  
Con le ancore fermati qui aspettiamo,  
Lodando l'Orsa, che colle sua luce  
Qui n'ha condotti, a noi essendo duce.”

Statius, however, furnishes a closer parallel to Chaucer: “*Et mea iam longo meruit ratis aequore portum*” (xii. 809). Other instances of this metaphor are abundant; cf. *Stat. Silv.* iv. 4, 88: “*Iam Sidonios emensa labores Thebais optato collegit carbasa portu*”; *Ovid A. A.* II. 9: “*Mediis tua pinus in undis Navigat, et longe quem peto, portus abest*”; also *Fast.* II. 863 f., III. 789 f., iv. 18; *Roman de Troie* 14869-74. See Riedner's *Diss.* p. 57.

Skeat notes that Chaucer seems to have gotten the notion that Helicon was a well <sup>1</sup> on Mt. Parnassus thus confusing it with the Castalian spring. Cf. *H. F.* 520 ff.:

<sup>1</sup> Burns, too, regards Helicon as a spring:

“O, were I on Parnassus' Hill  
Or had of Helicon my fill” . . . .

"And ye, me to endyte and ryme  
Helpeth, that on *Parnaso* dwelle  
By *Elicon* the clere welle."

Cf. also *Troil.* III. 1809:

"Ye sustren nyne eek, that by *Elicone*  
In hil *Parnaso* listen for to abyde."

The source of Chaucer's error is probably Boccaccio, *Tes.* XI. 63, where the achievements of Apollo are represented on a shield received by Theseus as his prize in a wrestling match:

"E quindi sotto l'ombre graziose  
Sopra *Parnasso* presso all' *Elicone*  
Fonte seder con le nove amorose  
Muse, e cantar maestrevol canzone."

Boccaccio evidently forgot that he had called Helicon a mountain in the *Teseide* (I. 1) and in the *Geneal. Deor.* (*De Mont.*).

With *laurer which that may not fade* may be compared Lucret. I. 118 f.: "Ennius ut noster cecenit, qui primus amoeno Detulit ex Helicone *perenni fronde coronam*." According to Pliny *H. N.* xv. 30, 40, the best laurel grew on Parnassus; so Vergil *G.* 2, 18 says *Parnasia laurus*.

On *Anel.* 22-46, see p. 44.

"Mars, which that through his furious course of yre,  
The olde wrath of Iuno to fulfille,  
Hath set the peples hertes both on fyre  
Of Thebes and Grece, everich other to kille  
With bloody speres, ne rested never stille,  
But throng now her, nor ther, among hem bothe,  
That everich other slogh, so wer they wrothe" (50-56).

"Ma Marte il quale i popoli lernei  
Con furioso corso avie commossi  
Sopra i Tebani, e miseri trofei  
Donati avea de' principi percossi  
Più volte già, e de' Greci plebei  
Ritenuti tal volta, e tal riscossi  
Con asta sanguinosa fieramente,  
Trista avea fatta l'una e l'altra gente" (*Tes.* II. 10).



Statius' description of Mars' furious course of ire in inciting the hosts to battle is found *Theb.* vii. 105-145; cf. especially 131-9: "Ut vero amentibus ipse Incidit et sacrae circum fastigia vallis Turbine praevectus rapido ter sustulit hastam, ter concussit equos, clipeum ter pectore plausit: Arma, arma (insani!) sua quisque ignotaque nullo More rapit, mutant galeas alienaque cogunt Ad iuga cornipedes; ferus omni in pectore saevit Mortis amor caedisque, nihil flagrantibus obstat: Praecipitant redimuntque moras."

The wrath of Juno was kindled against Thebes because it was the place of Jove's amours with Europa, Alcmene, and Semele. The river Ismenos reproaching Jupiter for allowing the death of Crenaeus says (*Theb.* ix. 421): "Huncne mihi, superum regnator honorem, Quod totiens hospesque tuis et conscius actis (Nec memorare timor) falsa nunc improba fronte Cornua, nunc vetitam currus deiungere Phoeben, Dotalisque rogos deceptaque fulmina vidi Praecipuosque alui natorum?" Juno mentions other grievances of a similar nature (*Theb.* i. 250 ff.); but her hate was especially aroused by Jove's compliance with Semele's request (i. 256): "Illam odimus urbem, Quam vultu confessus adis, ubi conscia magni Signa tori tonitrus agis et mea fulmina torques." Cf. further *C. T.*, A. 1329, 1544, 1559; *Theb.* i. 11, iv. 672; vii. 156, 195, 663; x. 900; xi. 211; *Tes.* iii. 66; v. 56; ix. 44; iii. 1:

"Poichè alquanto il furor di Giunone  
Fu per Tebe distrutta temperato,  
Marte nella sua fredda regione  
Colle sue furie insieme s' è tornato."

"For whan *Amphiorax* and *Tydeus*,  
*Ipomedon*, *Parthonope* also  
Were dede, and slayn [was] proud *Campaneus*,  
And whan the wrecches *Thebans*, bretheren two,  
Were slayn, and king *Adrastus* hoom a-go,  
So desolat stood *Thebes* and so bare,  
That no wight coude remedie of his care" (57-63).

"And whan the olde *Oreon* gan espye  
How that the blood roial was brought adoun,

He held the cite by his tyrannye,  
And did the gentils of that regioun  
To been his frendes, and dwellen in the toun.  
So what for love of him, and what for awe,  
The noble folk were to the toun y-drawe" (64-70).

"*Perchiocchè dopo Anfiaro, Tideo  
Stato era ucciso, e 'l buono Ippomedone,  
E similmente il bel Partenopeo,  
E più Teban de' qua' non fo menzione,  
Innanzi e dopo al fiero Capaneo,  
E dietro a tutti in doloroso agone,  
Eteocle e Polinice ognun fedito  
Morti, ed Adrasto ad Argo era fuggito*" (Tes. II. 11).

"*Onde il misero regno era rimaso  
Voto di gente, e pien d' ogni dolore;  
Ma in picciol' ora da Creonte invaso  
Fu, che di quello si fe' re e signore  
Con tristo augurio, e 'n doloroso caso  
Recò insieme il regno suo e l'onore,  
Per fiera crudeltà da lui usata,  
Mai da null' altro davanti pensata*" (Tes. II. 12).

Boccaccio in this epitome follows the order of events in the *Thebaid*. Amphiaraus was the first of the Argive chieftains to meet his death. The *Thebaid* VII. 794 ff. describes the earthquake which swallowed him up. Next Tydeus was slain by Melanippus, and in turn slew his enemy (VIII. 716 ff.). Hippomedon was overcome by the angry torrent of the Ismenos (IX. 446 ff.) and fell an easy prey to the enemy when he reached the bank (IX. 526). The aid of Diana did not avail to save Parthenopaeus from the death decreed by Fate (IX. 711 ff.). Capaneus' contempt of the gods led him to challenge Jove to battle (X. 899 ff.).<sup>1</sup> When Adrastus failed to prevent mortal combat between Eteocles and Polynices (XI. 429), he fled from Thebes. He was the sole survivor of the Seven. Creon's *cru-*

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that in the *Roman de Thèbes* (MSS. SPA) Capaneus does not meet his death during the siege directed by Adrastus, but in that directed by Theseus. And then he is not struck by lightning, but his head is crushed by a rock thrown from the top of the wall (II. 10087-96). He is called *ferus* (*Theb.* X. 257); cf. *fiero* (Tes. II. 11).

*delta* referred to by Boccaccio was shown by his edict that the corpses of the Argives should not be buried (*Theb.* XII. 94 ff.).

### *Canterbury Tales: Group A.*

*Knightes Tale.* Tyrwhitt pointed out that the *K. T.* is based on Boccaccio's *Teseide*,<sup>1</sup> but it was Henry Ward's comparison of the *Knight's Tale* with the *Teseide* that determined the extent of Chaucer's obligation. Ward's results are indicated by marginal notes in the *Six-Text Print* of the *Tales*. From these notes it appears that only 270 lines are translated from Boccaccio; 374 more have a general likeness and 132 a slight likeness to passages in the *Teseide*.<sup>2</sup> Two errors in Ward's marginal notes may here be mentioned: The reference for A. 893-900 is *Tes.* II. 25; there is nothing in the *Teiseide* corresponding to A. 989-90.

A minute comparison of several descriptive portions of the *K. T.* with the *Teseide* was made by J. Koch in the first chapter of an article first published in the *Englische Studien* (I, p. 249 ff.) and afterwards translated by the author for the *Chaucer Soc.* (*Essays* IV. pp. 357 ff.).

The statement that Boccaccio kept the text of Statius before him and made extensive use of it needs no further proof than is to be found in the parallels now to be cited. There are still other borrowings; for Chaucer did not use every passage of the *Teseide* that is due to Statius.

The indirect influence of the *Thebaid* is extensive at the beginning of the *K. T.* (A. 859-996); for Boccaccio in the corresponding portion of the *Teseide* follows Statius very closely, as will partially appear from the passages cited below.

"Whylom, as olde stories tellen us,  
Ther was a duk that highte Theseus;  
Of Athenes he was lord and governour,

<sup>1</sup> Kissner, Diss., p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Furnivall's *Temporary Preface*, p. 104.

And in his tyme swich a conquerour,  
That gretter was ther noon under the sonne.  
Ful many a riche contree had he wonne" (859-64).

*Tes.* i. 13: Teseo il lor signor possente *Duca di Atene*; i. 99: Teseo alto duca d'Atene; cf. *Tes.* i. 40, 109, 121. Statius' tribute to Theseus as a warrior is the epithet *belliger* (xii. 546): cf. inclite Theseu (xii. 555). Besides conquering the Amazons and Creon, he was victorious over the notorious robbers Sinis, Cercyo, and Sciron. He killed the Marthonian bull, and slew the Minotaur; cf. *Theb.* v. 431 f., xii. 667 ff., *Legend* 2136 ff. and 2443 ff. Cf. further *Tes.* i. 108: acciocchè mia fama fiorita Tra le genti dimori; ii. 5: La tua prodezza, la qual già sapea Ciaschedun regno; Ovid *M.* viii. 268.

"What with his wisdom and his chivalrye,  
He conquered al the regne of Femenye,<sup>1</sup>  
That whylom was y-cleped Scithia;  
And weddede the quene Ipolita,  
And broghte hir hoom with him in his contree  
With muchel glorie and greet solempnitee,  
And eek hir yonge suster Emelye" (865-71).

*Theb.* xii. 519: Iamque domos patrias *Scythicae post aspera gentis Proelia*, xii. 592: Non haec ego pectora liqui Graiorum abscedens, Scythiam Pontumque nivalem Cum peterem; xii. 761: "Non cum peltiferis," ait, "haec tibi pugna puellis Virgineas ne crede manus" (cf. xii. 163); *Tes.* i. 109; Ippolita reina alta e possente, La quale il popol femminile onora; ii. *Arg.*: Questo secondo mostra il ritornare Che fe' Teseo di *Scitia vincente*; i. 6: Al tempo che Egeo re d'Atene era, Fur donne in *Scitia* crude e dispietate.

*Theb.* xii. 533: Nec non populos in semet agebat *Hippolyte*, iam blanda genas *patiensque mariti Foederis*; xii. 539: *hosti veniat paritura marito*; *Tes.* i. 99: *Ippolita regina*; i. 124: Fermarsi che esso (Teseo) prendesse *Ippolita per sua eterna sposa*; ii. 9: Entrò senza dimoro In mare, e insieme Ippolita

<sup>1</sup> With *Femenye*, cf. Gower, *C. A.* iv. 2140, v. 2548; *Roman de Troie* 23283 ff., 25663-704.



reina E tra più donne ne menar con loro *La bella Emilia, stella mattutina*; II. 18: Teseo con vento fresco al suo viaggio *Contento ritornava in verso Atene . . . e con colei che 'l suo cuor guida e tene Ippolita reina*; I. 136: *sorella alla reina, Emilia nominata la fantina*; II. 24: Con infinito d' uomini tumulto *Dovunque già con grida eran lodate L'opere sue magnifiche, e con gloria* Le dicean degne d'eterna memoria.

"And thus with victorie and with melodye,  
Lete I this noble duk to Athenes ryde,  
And al his hoost, in armes, him bisyde" (872-4).

*Theb.* XII. 520: *laurigero subeuntem Thesea curru Laetifici plausus missusque ad sidera vulgi Clamor et emeritis hilaris tuba nuntiat armis*; XII. 541 *dona triumphi mirantur*; *Tes.* II. 23: In diverse brigate festeggiando, *A cavallo ed a piè erano andati Gli Ateniesi in vêr di lui cantando* Di yarii vestimenti divisati *Con infiniti* suoni ognun festando, E con esso in Atene rientrati.

In lines 875-883 Chaucer summarizes the first book of the *Teseide*, which is independent of the *Thebaid* with perhaps the exception of *Tes.* I. 47-77 where Boccaccio describes the battle which took place when Theseus attempted to land on the Scythian coast; cf. A. 879 f:

"And of the grete bataille for the nones  
Betwixen Athenës and Amazones."

This battle may have been suggested to Boccaccio by a similar battle between the Lemnian women and the Argonauts, described by Statius (*Theb.* v. 335 ff.). In both cases there are around the harbor fortifications from which women, who have slain their husbands, send showers of arrows, stones and fire-brands upon the men as they attempt a landing.

Having succeeded in landing and having put the Amazons to flight, Theseus then laid siege to the fortress of the Amazons (I. 80 ff.). When the city capitulated, he stipulated as one of the conditions of peace (I. 124) that Hippolyta should become his wife. He married her in the temple of Venus (I. 134).

"This duk, of whom I make mencion,  
*When he was come almost unto the toun,*  
*In al his wele and in his moste pryde,*  
 He was war, as he caste his eye *asyde,*  
*Wher that ther kneled in the hye weye*  
*A companye of ladies, tweye and tweye,*  
 Ech after other, *clad in clothes blake;*  
 But *swich a cry and swich a wo they make,*  
 That in this world nis creature livinge,  
 That herde swich another weymentinge;  
 And of this cry they nolde never stenten,  
 Til they the reynes of his brydel henten" (893-904).

Cf. the parallels quoted for ll. 872-4 above.

"E mentre ch' egli in cotal guisa giva,  
 Per avventura *dinanzi al pietoso*  
*Tempio passò, nel qual era l' achiva*  
*Turba di donne in abito doglioso,*  
*Le quali, udendo che quivi veniva,*  
*Si si levaron con atto furioso,*  
*Con alte grida, pianto e gran romore*  
 Pararsi innanzi al carro del signore" (Tes. II. 25).

Cf. II. 27 l'abito tristo; II. 26 in atri vestimenti; II. 37 l'abito scuro; *Theb.* XII. 111 *nigrae regina catervae.* *Theb.* XII. 540: *Paulum et ab insessis maestae Pelopeides aris Promovere gradum seriemque et dona triumphi Mirantur, victique animo rediere mariti.*

The temple of *Clementia* or *Clemenza* where the Grecian matrons made their plea to Theseus was in the city according to Statius and Boccaccio; cf. *Theb.* XII. 481 ff. and *Tes.* II. 17, 24, 25. But according to Chaucer's version the duke did not enter the city; cf. A. 894 and 968.

"What folk ben ye, that at myn hoom-cominge  
 Peturben so my feste with cryinge?"  
 Quod Theseus, "have ye so greet envye  
 Of myn honour, that thus compleyne and crye?  
 Or who hath yow misboden, or offended?  
 And telleth me if it may been amended;  
 And why that ye ben clothed thus in blak?" (905-911).

"*Chi son costor che a' nostri lieti avventi*  
*Co' crini sparti battendosi il petto,*  
*Di squallor piene in atri vestimenti,*

*Tutte piangendo? come se 'n dispetto  
 Avesson la mia gloria, all' altre genti,  
 Siccome io vedo, cagion di diletto?  
 Disse Teseo stupefatto stando" (Tes. II. 26).*

*Theb. XII. 543: Atque ubi tardavit et ab axe superbo Explorat  
 causas victor poscitque benigno Ore preces.*

"The eldest lady of hem alle spak,  
 When she hadde swowned with a deedly chere,  
 That it was routhe for to seen and here,  
 And seyde: "Lord to whom Fortune hath yiven  
 Victorie, and as a conquerour to liven,  
 Noght greveth us your glorie and your honour;  
 But we biseken mercy and socour  
 Have mercy on our wo and our distresse" (912-19).

With 912 cf. 931.

"*A cui una rispose lagrimando:*  
*Signor, non ammirar l' abito tristo*  
*Che innanzi a tutte ci fa dispettose,*  
*Nè creder pianger noi del tuo acquisto,*  
*Nè d' aleuno tuo onor esser crucciose:*  
*Benchè l' averti in cotal gloria visto*  
*Pe' nostri danni ne faccia animose*  
*A pianger più, che non facemmo forse*  
*Essendo pur dal primo dolor morse" (II. 26-7).*

*Theb. XII. 545: Ausa ante alias Capaneia coniunx: Belliger  
 Aegide, subitae cui maxima laudis Semina de nostris aperit For-  
 tuna ruinis.* The mention of *Fortuna* by Statius may have  
 suggested A. 915 f.

"For certes, lord, *ther nis noon of us alle,*  
 That she nath been a duchesse or a quene" (922 f.).

*Tes. II. 28: E qualunque altra che tu vedi in questa Turba, di  
 re fu madre, o moglie, o suora, o figlia.* *Theb. XII. 548: Non  
 externa genus, dirae nec conscia noxae Turba sumus: domus  
 Argos erat regesque mariti.*

"And, certes, lord, *to abyden your presence,*  
*Here in the temple of the goddesse Clemence*  
*We han been waytinge al this fourtenight" (927-29).*

Tes. II. 17: "Esse non vollon da nessuno onore,  
Ma solo il tempio cercar di Clemenza.  
E in quello con gravissimo dolore  
Stanche e lasse fecion risedenza,  
Aspettando con lagrime il signore,  
Assai crucciose della sua assenza."

*Theb.* XII. 481: Urbe fuit media nulli concessa potentum Ara  
deum, mitis posuit Clementia sedem; 512: Huc vulgo mon-  
strante locum manus anxia Lernae deveniunt. In Statius,  
Evadne makes her plea seven days after the end of the siege  
of Thebes; cf. XII. 563: Septima iam surgens trepidis Aurora  
iacentes aversatur equis.

"I wrecche, which that wepe and waille thus,  
Was whylom wyf to king Capaneus,  
That starf at Thebes, cursed be that day!  
And alle we, that been in this array,  
And maken al this lamentacioun,  
We losten alle our housbondes at that town,  
Whyl that the sege ther-about lay" (931-37).

*Tes.* II. 28: Allora oltre si feo Evanes più che nessun' altra  
mesta, *Dicendo: sposa fui di Capaneo.* II. 29: *Davanti a Tebe,*  
*dove trista sorte Ciascun alto baron tolto ha con morte.* *Theb.*  
XII. 545: Ausa ante alias *Capaneia coniunx*; 550: Quid enim  
septena moveri Castra et *Agenoreos opus emendare penates?*  
*Nec querimur caesos* (maritos): haec bellica iura vicesque  
Armorum.

"And yet now the olde Creon, weylaway!  
That lord is now of Thebes the citee,  
*Fulfilde of ire and of iniquitee,*  
He for despyt, and for his tyrannye,  
To do the dede bodyes vileinye,  
Of alle our lordes, whiche that been slawe,  
Hath alle the bodyes on an heep y-drawe,  
And wol nat suffren hem, by noon assent,  
Neither to been y-buried nor y-brent,  
But maketh houndes ete hem in despyt" (938-47).

*Tes.* II. 30: Ma l'aspra *tirrania di quel ch' ha preso Il regno*  
dietro a lor, ciò n'ha difeso. II. 31: Il perfido Creonte, a cui



più dura L'odio che a morti non fece la vita, *A' greci corpi  
niega sepoltura*, Crudeltà credo mai più non udità; E di qua  
l'ombre alla palude oscura Di Stigia ci ritiene; onde infinita  
Doglia ci assal tra gli altri nostri mali, *Sentendoli mangiare  
agli animali*. *Theb.* *xi.* 648: *Et iam laeta ducum spes elusisse  
duorum Res Amphionias alio sceptrumque maligna Transtulerat  
Fortuna manu, Cadmique tenebat Iura Creon.* *xii.* 558: *quos  
vetat igne Creon Stygiaeque a limine portae.* *xii.* 93: *accen-  
saeque iterat violentius ira: 'Saevum agedum inमितemque vo-  
cent, si funera Lernae Tecum ardere veto;'* *xii.* 100: *'Quare  
iterum repetens iterum que edico: suprema Ne quis ope et  
flammis ausit iuvisse Pelasgos.'*

"And with that word, withouten more respyt,  
They fillen gruf, and cryden pitously" (948 f.).

*Tes.* *ii.* 35: *Le lagrime non eran mai mancate*, Perchè parlasse,  
*agli occhi di costei*, Ma sempre in quantità moltiplicate *E 'l  
simil era all' altre dietro a lei*. *Theb.* *xii.* 587: *Dixerat;  
excipiunt cunctae tenduntque precantes Cum clamore manus.*

"This gentil duk doun from his courser sterte  
With herte pitous, whan he herde hem speke.  
Him thoghte that his herte wolde breke,  
Whan he saugh hem so pitous and so mat,  
That whylom weren of so greet estat.  
And in his armes he hem alle up hente,  
And hem conforteth in ful good entente;  
And swoor his ooth, as he was trewe knight,  
He wolde doon so ferforthly his might  
Up-on the tyraunt Creon hem to wreke . . ." (952-61).

*Tes.* *ii.* 36: *E grave duol nel cuor gli venne quando Udì de' re  
la morte*, e dopo alquanto Così rispose al dolorose canto. *ii.*  
37: *L'abito scuro, e 'l piangere angoscioso*, E 'l voi conoscer pe'  
vostri maggiori; *Il ricordarmi il vostro esser pomposo*, Gli agi  
e' dilette e regni e' servitori, *E de' re vostri il regnar glorioso*  
*Hanno trovato ne' miei sommi onori A' vostri preghi luogo, e la  
mutata Fortuna trista di lieta tornata.* *ii.* 38: *Com' io credo  
poter far che sia dato Onor di sepoltura a cui donare Vi piacerà:*

e l' orgoglio abassato Di colui fia che ciò vi vuol negare. Però se al male avuto può conforto Porger vendetta, per me vi fia porto.

II. 39: Fortificate gli animi dolenti Con isperanza buona, *ch' io vi giuro* Prima che io e i miei baron possenti ci riposiam d'Atene dentro al muro, Di ciò faremo interi esperimenti. *Theb.* XII. 588: Rubuit Neptunius heros Permotus lacrimis. XII. 598: aut Danaïs edice rogos, aut proelia Thebis. XII. 594: Victumne putasti Thesea, dire Creon?

"And right anoon, with-outen more abood,  
His baner he displayeth, and forth rood  
To, Thebes-ward, and al his host bisyde" (965-7).

*Tes.* II. 50: *Le insegne che ancora ripiegate Non eran, si rizzaro prestamente: E' cavalier colle schiere ordinate* Dietro alla sua ciascuno acconciamente ne givano. *Theb.* XII. 596: 'Nulla mora est' . . . Sic ait oblitus bellicue viaeque laborum, Hortaturque suos viresque instaurat anhelas. XII. 611: Continuo in pugnas haut solum accensa iuventus. 614: Conveniunt ultroque ducis vexilla sequuntur. . .

"No neer Athenës wolde he go ne ryde,  
Ne take his ese fully half a day,  
But onward on his wey that night he lay" (968-70).

*Tes.* II. 49: Teseo adunque, senza rivedere *Il vecchio padre o parente od amico, Uscì d'Atene*, e non gli fu in calere D' Ippolita l'amor dolce e pudico, Nè alcun altro riposo . . . E come egli era entrato nella terra, *Così ne uscì alla novella guerra.* *Theb.* XII. 661: Noctem adeo placidasque operi iunxere tenebras.

"And sente anoon Ipolita the quene  
And Emelye hir yonge suster shene,  
Un-to the toun of Athenës to dwelle" (970-72).

*Tes.* II. 40: Si rivolse ad Ippolita dicendo: . . . *Dismonta, e col mio padre to starai* Finchè tornato me qui vederai. *Theb.* XII. 635: Isset et Arctoas Cadmea ad moenia ducens Hippolyte turmas: retinet iam certa tumentis Spes uteri, coniunxque rogat dimittere curas Martis et emeritas thalamo sacrare pharetras.

"Thus rit this duk, thus rit this conquerour,  
 And in his host of chivalrye the flour,  
*Til that he cam to Thebes, and alighte*  
*Faire in a feeld, ther as he thoghte fighte"* (981-4).

The combat between the two leaders is described *Tes.* II. 59-66; cf. especially II. 60: Poi (Teseo) tutte in sè sue forze raccogliea, E furioso li si lascia andare Addosso a lui, e per tal forza il fere, che lo gittò per morto del destriere. *Theb.* XII. 773: Sic fatus (Theseus), et auras Dissipat hasta tremens; tunc qua subtemine duro Multiplicem tenues iterant thoraca catenae, Incidit: emicuit per mille foramina sanguis Impius; ille oculis extremo errore solutis Labitur. Boccaccio's *in sè sue forze raccogliea* is his rendering of *extrema se colligit ira* (*Theb.* XII. 759). *Tes.* II. 69: Laonde in fuga trista ed angosciosa, Siccome gente che più non potieno, Si volson tutti, che nessun non osa Volgersi indietro ed insieme aspettarsi, Tanto di presso vidien seguitarsi. According to Statius, the Thebans, upon the death of Creon, invited Theseus to enter the city: Accedunt utrimque pio vexilla tumultu Permiscentque manus; medio iam foedera bello, Iamque hospes Theseus; orant succedere muris Dignarique domos (*Theb.* XII. 782).

"And to the ladyes he restored agayn  
 The bones of hir housbondes that were slayn,  
 To doon obsequies, as was tho the gyse" (991-3).

*Tes.* II. 76: *Donne*, gl' iddii alla vostra ragione Hanno prestata debita vittoria, E però con dovuta oblazione Tenuti siam d' esaltar la lor gloria; Però mettete ad asseguizione, Ciò che de' vostri faceste memoria: *Date alli vostri re l' uficio pio, Secondo che avete nel disio.* *Theb.* XII. 789: Ecce per adversas Dircaeï verticis umbras Feminæ quatit astra fragor, matresque Pelasgae Decurrunt . . . gaudent lamenta novaeque Exultant lacrimae; rapit huc, rapit impetus illuc, Thesea magnanimum quaerant prius, anne Creonta, Anne suos: *vidui ducent ad corpora luctus.*

"But it were al to long for to devyse  
 The grete clamour and the waymentinge



That the ladyes made at the brenninge  
Of the bodyes. . . " (994-7).

*Tes.* II. 79: *Quindi de' corpi le parti raccolte, Prima ne' fiumi gli bagnavan tutti, Po' gli potieno sopra i roghi strutti*; cf. II. 80. II. 81: *E'n cotal guisa la turba piagnente Con fuochi i morti corpi consumaro.* *Theb.* XII. 797: *Non ego, centena si quis mea pectora laxet Voce deus, tot busta simul vulgique ducumque, Tot pariter gemitus dignis conantibus aequem.* Cf. further 800-807. Statius ends his epic by excusing himself for not describing the burial of the Argive chieftains. Here similarity of situation between the *Teseide* and *Thebaid* ceases, nevertheless many lines of Boccaccio's story of the prisoners Palemon and Arcita are due to Statius. In paralleling Chaucer's account of Theseus' Amazonian triumph and Theban expedition with quotations from his sources, the close relation between Boccaccio and Statius at this point has been only partially brought out. With the exception of lines A. 915, 975, and 980, where Chaucer went back to Boccaccio's source for details, the *Teseide* is the immediate source for the opening of the *K. T.* (A. 859-996). However, a very important fact must be remembered, viz.: the *Thebaid* XII. 519 ff. (quoted in the ms. at the beginning of the Tale) determined the starting-point of Chaucer's narrative. He begins with the description of Theseus' triumph; and outlines the antecedent portion of Boccaccio's story.

" . . . and the grete honour  
That Theseus, the noble conquerour,  
Doth to the ladyes, whan they from him wente " (997-9).

Chaucer may be thinking of Theseus' permission to the ladies to do as they pleased with Thebes, *Tes.* II. 77; cf. 81.

"He took his host, and hoom he rood anon  
With laurer crowned as a conquerour" (1026 f.).

Chaucer here speaks of Theseus' crown of laurel which he omitted to mention in his description of the Amazonian triumph at the beginning of the Tale, but did not omit in the corre-



sponding description in the *Anelida* (l. 24 f.). Boccaccio does not mention the laurel crown in connection with the second triumph, but does so in connection with the first: *Tes.* II. 21: corona d' allor; cf. *Theb.* XII. 520 laurigero . . . curru.

"A worthy duk that highte Perotheus,  
That felawe was un-to duk Theseus  
Sin thilke day that they were children lyte,  
Was come to Athenes, his felawe to visyte,  
And for to pleye, as he was wont to do,  
For in this world he loved no man so:  
And he loved him as tendrely ageyn.  
So wel they loved, as olde bokes seyn,  
That whan that oon was dead, sothly to telle,  
His felawe wente and soghte him down in helle" (1191-1200).

Boccaccio tells of Pirithous' visit to *Teseo, suo caro amico* (*Tes.* III. 47 ff.); but does not speak of his entrance to Hades by natural death. Chaucer found this mediaeval perversion of classical mythology<sup>1</sup> in the *Roman de la Rose*, 8186 ff., as Skeat observes. The lines are:—

<sup>1</sup> According to classical legend Theseus, the sworn friend of Pirithous, accompanied him to Hades to aid him in his daring attempt to carry off Proserpina as his bride. But Pluto bound both heroes to a rock where they remained until Hercules delivered Theseus, but left Pirithous. Chaucer's use of the word *felawe* suggests that he knew from other sources that there was an oath of friendship binding Theseus and Pirithous. Statius (*Theb.* I. 474) compares the friendship between Tydeus and Polyneices to that between Theseus and Pirithous, thus showing that the fidelity of the latter pair was proverbial: *siquidem hanc perhibent post vulnera iunctis Esse fidem, quanta partitum extrema protervo Thesea Pirithoo*. Statius again refers to the great danger Theseus incurred for the sake of his friend. Pluto, speaking of the invasion of his realm, says (VIII. 53): *Me Pirithoi temerarius ardor Temptat et audaci Theseus iuratus amico*. Cf. VIII. 96: *Nec Venerem illicitam (crede his insignibus) ausi Intramus Lethen: fugiat ne tristis in antrum Cerberus, aut nostros timeat Proserpina currus*.

Lactantius in his note on *Theb.* VIII. 53 says: *Haec Pirithoi fabula talis est: Pirithous cum Proserpinam rapere suo matrimonio induxisset in animum, huius tam scelerati consilii Theseum participem fecit. Quem cum amicitiarum intuitu Theseus ad inferos Proserpinam pariter rapturus secutus fuisset gravi sunt utrique damnati supplicio. Unde Virgilius: 'sedet aeternumque sedebit infelix Theseus' (cf. *Aen.* VI. 617 f.). See Lactantius' note to *Theb.* I. 476; Roscher's *Lexikon* s. v. *Peirithous*; and compare the note to *Troil.* v. 1488, p. 28.*

"Si cum vesquist, ce dist l' istoire,  
Pyrithoüs après sa mort,  
Que Theseus tant ama mort.  
Tant le queroit, tant le sivoit. . .  
Que vis en enfer l' ala querre."

"Allas! y-brought is to confusioun  
The blood royal of Cadme and Amphioun;  
Of Cadmus, which that was the firste man  
That Thebes bulte, or first the toun bigan,  
And of the citee first was crowned king" (1545-49).

*Tes.* iv. 13: O Anfione, Se tu, intanto che co' dolci canti Della tua lira, tocca con ragione Per chiuder Tebe, i monte circus-tanti Chiamasti, avessi immaginato questo, Forse ti sarie stato il suon molesto. iv. 14: *Dove son ora le case eminenti Del nostro primo Cadmo?*

Allusions to Cadmus as the founder of Thebes are, of course, numerous in the *Thebaid*. Upon the occasion of Amphiaras' fall to Tartarus, the Thebans celebrated their victory over the besiegers and sang pæns concerning their origin (*Theb.* viii. 227): Nunc fata revolvunt Maiorum veteresque canunt ab origine Thebas: Hi mare Sidonium manibusque attrita Tonantis Cornua et ingenti sulcatum Nerea tauro, Hi Cadmum lassamque bovem fetosque cruenti Martis agros, alii Tyriam reptantia saxa Ad chelyn et duras animantem Amphiona cautes. Cadmus, after his futile search for his sister Europa had perpetually exiled him from his native land, consulted the oracle of Apollo and was counseled to found a city. *Lassa bos* is the cow that directed him to its site, and *feti agri Martis* are the fields sown with the teeth of Mars' dragon.

The line of Theban kings descended from Cadmus and Harmonia, daughter of Mars and Venus. When Œdipus solved the riddle of the Sphinx and married his mother, the royal line became *confusus*. Cf. *Theb.* i. 16: Limes mihi carminis esto Oedipodæ *confusa domus*. Note that Chaucer here, as elsewhere in the *K. T.*, takes Boccaccio as a guide in using knowledge which he gained directly from the *Thebaid*. The Italian quoted above is not a sufficient source for the specific statements of Chaucer's lines.

"O regne, that wolt no felawe have with thee!  
 Ful sooth is seyde, that love ne lordshipe  
 Wol noght, his thankes, have no felaweshipe" (1624-26).

Boccaccio is source for the last two lines, but Chaucer seems to have gone to Boccaccio's source for the first line. *Tes.* v. 13: Signoria Nè amore sta bene in Compagnia. *Theb.* i. 127: inde regendi Saevus amor, ruptaeque vices iurisque secundi Ambitus impatiens, et summo dulcius unum Stare loco, sociisque comes discordia regnis. Compare *Tes.* v. 13 with *Theb.* i. 46-130.

"Right as the hunter in the regne of Trace,  
 That stondeth at the gappe with a spere,  
 Whan hunted is the leoun or the bere,  
 And hereth him come russhing in the greves,  
 And breketh bothe bowes and the leves,  
 And thinketh, 'heer cometh my mortel enemy,  
 With-oute faile, he moot be deed, or I;  
 For outhur I mot sleen him at the gappe,  
 Or he mot sleen me, if that me mishappe' . . ." (1638 ff.).

Bell acutely remarked: "This fine simile appears to have been taken from the *Thebais* iv. 494": *Qualis Gaetulæ stabulantem ad confraga silvæ Venator longo motum clamore leonem Expectat* firmans animum et sudantia nisu Tela premens; gelat ora pavor gressusque tremescunt, *Quis veniat* quantusque, sed *horrida signa frementis Accipit et caeca metitur murmura cura*. Henry Ward showed that Chaucer has, in fact, combined two passages in the *Teseide* (vii. 106, 119). Strophes 106 and 107 are a close adaptation of the lines just quoted from Statius: E ciaschedun per sè divenne tale, *Qual ne' getuli boschi il cacciatore A' rotti balzi accostatosi, il quale Il leon mosso per lungo romore Aspetta, e ferma in sè l' animo eguale; E nella faccia gela per tremore, Premendo i teli per forza tremanti, E li suoi passi treman tutti quanti: Nè sa chi venga, nè qual' e' si sia, Ma di fremènte orribili segni Riceve nella mente, che disia Di non avere a ciò tesi gl' ingegni*. Statius introduces the simile to depict the dread of Eteocles as to the answer of the oracle. Boccaccio uses it to portray the fear of



Palemon and Arcita at the beginning of the tournament while Chaucer had transferred it to the occasion of their duel where it is much more appropriate.

With lines A. 1641-2, compare *Tes.* vii. 119: Qual per lo bosco il cinghiar rovinoso, Poi ch' ha di dietro a sè sentiti i cani, Le setole levate, ed ispumoso Or qua or là per viottoli strani Ruggiante va fuggendo furioso, Rami rompendo,<sup>1</sup> e schiantando silvani; Cotale entrò mirabilmente armato Palemon quivi da ciascun mirato.

The resemblance between A. 1698-1713 and *Theb.* i. 438 ff. is slight: in both instances a ruler stops a fight between two men, and demands to know who the combatants are (See Skeat's note to 1698). However, it is probable that Boccaccio, who is Chaucer's direct source for this description, adapted the general outline of the combat between Palemon and Arcita, alias Penteo (*Tes.* v. 75-87), from the description of the fisti-cuff between Tydeus and Polynices (*Theb.* i. 418-467). In both Statius and Boccaccio, we have consecutively: the ruler's interference, his asking who the combatants are, and their replies. Chaucer is nearer to Statius than to Boccaccio in one particular: Palemon like Tydeus would shift the blame upon his opponent.

<sup>1</sup> The words *rami rompendo* in the original suggest, and the sense in the English demands, that *breking* be read instead of *breketh* (l. 1642); for the wild animal, not the man, breaks *bothe bowes and the lewes*, hence the verb should be coördinate with *russhing*. The scribal error is due to the ending of *hereth* in the line above. The mss. uniformly suggest *-eth*: The Ellesmere, Hengwrt and Petworth read *breketh*; Cambridge, *brekith*; Lansdowne *brekethe*; Corpus, *bereth*.

Similarly these six mss. are probably erroneous at C. T., B. 1749, where it would seem that *aspes*, not *waspes*, should be read:

Our firste fo, the serpent Sathanas  
That hath in Iewes herte his waspes nest.

The scribe evidently did not know that the *aspis* is one of the deadly serpents. Pliny, *H. N.* 29, 65: *Aspides percussos torpore et somno necant, omnium serpentium minime sanabiles*. Augustine, *In Psalm.* 57, 14: *Aspides erant, serpentes erant (Iudaei)*; 13, 3: *venenum dolum dicit, aspidum autem, quia nolunt audire praecepta legis, sicut aspides nolunt audire verba incantantis*.

*Thes*  
*589*  
*417*



In describing the temple of Mars (*Tes.* VII. 29-37), Boccaccio follows Statius (*Theb.* VII. 34-73) rather closely just as he did in describing Theseus' Amazonian triumph. Chaucer (A. 1967-2050), though he follows Boccaccio in the main, goes back to the ultimate source for additional details. Besides, many lines are independent of either source.

"Why sholde I noght as wel eek telle you al  
*The portreiture, that was up-on the wal*  
*With-inne the temple of mighty Mars the rede?*  
*Al peynted was the wal, in lengthe and brede,*  
*Lyk to the estres of the grisly place,*  
*That highte the grete temple of Mars in Trace,*  
*In thilke colde frosty regioun,*  
*Ther-as Mars hath his sovereyn mansioun"* (1967-74).

*Tes.* VII. 36: *Ed era il tempio tutto istoriato Da sottil mano e di sopra d' intorno; VII. 29 orribile ospizio; VII. 32: La luce, che abborriva il luogo rio. Theb.* VII. 41 *horrescitque tuens.*  
*Tes.* III. 1 *Marte nella fredda regione; VII. 30: Ne' campi traccii sotto i cieli iberni. Theb.* VII. 34: *At Thracum Cyllenius arva subibat Atque illum Arctoae labentem cardine portae.*  
*Tes.* VII. 29: *La qual divenne di spavento muta Com' di Marte la casa ebbe veduta. Theb.* VII. 40: *Hic steriles delubra notat Mavortia silvas; VII. 42: domus inmansueta.*

"First on the wal was peynted a foreste,  
*In which ther dwelleth neither man ne beste,*  
*With knotty knarry bareyn treës olde*  
*Of stubbes sharpe and hidous to biholde;*  
*In which ther ran a rumbel and a swough,*  
*As though a storm sholde bresten every bough"* (1975-80).

*Tes.* VII. 31: *E 'n una selva steril di robusti Cerri, dov' eran folti ed alti molto, Nodosi ed aspri, rigidi e vetusti, Che d'ombra eterna ricuoprono il volto Del tristo suolo, e in fra gli antichi fusti, Da ben mille furor sempre ravvolto, Vi si sentia grandissimo romore, Nè v' era bestia ancora nè pastore. Theb.* VII. 36: *Tempestas aeterna plagae praetentaque caelo Agmina nimborum primique Aquilonis hiatus In diversa ferunt: crepat aurea grandine multa Palla, nec Arcadii bene protegit umbra galeri. Hic steriles delubra notat Mavortia silvas.*

"And downcard from an hille under a bente,  
Ther stood the temple of Mars armipotente,  
Wroght al of burned steel, of which thentree  
Was long and streit, and gastly for to see" (1981-4).

*Tes.* VII. 32: In questa vide la ca' dello Iddio Armipotente, e questa è edificata Tutta d' acciaio splendido e pulio . . . Tutta di ferro era la stretta entrata. *Theb.* VII. 41 . . . ubi mille furoribus illi Cingitur averso domus inmansueta sub Haemo. *Ferre compago laterum, ferro apta teruntur Limina.*

Boccaccio says nothing about the configuration of this region of Thrace; and so Chaucer (A. 1981) goes back to the *Thebaid* (VII. 42) for this particular which makes his description more picturesque. Boccaccio's epithet for Mars, *armipotente*, was taken from the *Thebaid* (VII. 78) *Armipotens*.

"The dores were alle of adamant eterne  
Y- clenched overthwart and endelong  
With iren tough; and, for to make it strong,  
Every piler, the temple to sustene,  
Was tonne-greet, of iren bright and shene" (1990-94).

*Tes.* VII. 32: *E le porte eran d' eterno diamante, Ferrate d' ogni parte tutte quante.* *Theb.* VII. 68: *clausaeque adamante perenni Dissiluere fores.* *Tes.* VII. 33: *E le colonne di ferro costei Vide, che l' edificio sostenieno.* *Theb.* VII. 44: *ferratis incumbunt tecta columnis.*

"The cruel ire, reed as any glede;  
The pykepurs, and eek the pale drede" (1997 f.).

*Tes.* VII. 33: *Videvi l' Ire rosse come fuoco, E la Paura pallida in quel loco.* *Theb.* VII. 48: *Iraeque rubentes Exanguesque Metus.*

"The smyler with the knyf under the cloke" (1999).

*Tes.* VII. 34: *E con gli occulti ferri i Tradimenti Vide, e le Insidie con giusta apparenza.* *Theb.* VII. 49: *occultisque ensibus astant Insidiae.* Anyone must admit that Chaucer's characterization of treachery is the best of the three.

"Contek, with bloody knyf and sharp menace;  
Al ful of chirking was that sory place" (2003 f.).

*Tes.* VII. 34: *Lì Discordia sedeva, e sanguinenti Ferri avie in mano, e di ogni differenza; E tutti i luoghi pareano strepenti D' aspre minacce e di crudele intenza.* *Theb.* VII. 50: *geminumque tenens Discordia ferrum. Innumeris strepit aula Minis.* Chaucer renders *aspre minacce* by *sharp menace*; and uses it in a different connection referring it to *contek* (*Discordia*).

"Amiddes of the temple sat meschaunce,  
With disconfort and sory countenance" (2009 f.).

*Tes.* VII. 34: *E 'n mezzo il loco la Virtù tristissima Sedie di degne lode poverissima.* *Theb.* VII. 51: *Tristissima Virtus Stat medio.* *Meschaunce* supplants *Virtus* in Chaucer's adaptation.

"Yet saugh I woodnesse laughing in his rage;  
Armed compleint, out-hees, and fiers outrage" (2011 f.).

*Tes.* VII. 35: *Videvi ancora l' allegro Furore E oltre a ciò con volto sanguinoso La Morte armata vide e lo Stupore.* *Theb.* VII. 52: *laetusque Furor vultuque cruento Mors armata sedet.* By a curious anachronism, Chaucer makes the Knight speak as though he had seen in Theseus' temple all the illusive portraiture of the real temple of Mars in Thrace as seen by Cyllenius in the *Thebaid* or by Arcita's prayer in the *Teseide*. Cf. A. 1995, 2005, 2017, and 2028. The explanatory theory is that Chaucer's description has been "superficially modified" from his earlier translation of the *Teseide*.<sup>1</sup>

"The tiraunt, with the prey by force y-raft;  
The toun destroyed, ther was nothing laft" (2015 f.).

*Tes.* VII. 36: *Eran le prede di notte e di giorno Tolte alle terre . . . Vedevansi le genti incatenate, Porti di ferro e fortezze spezzate.* *Theb.* VII. 54: *. . . incensis qui raptus ab urbibus ignis. Terrarum exuviae circum et fastigia templi Captae insignibant gentes, caelataque ferro Fragmina portarum.*

"Yet saugh I brent the shippes hoppesteres" (2017).

<sup>1</sup> See Koch, Chaucer Society (*Essays* IV., p. 369 ff.).



*Tes.* VII. 37: Videvi ancor le navi bellatrici. *Theb.* VII. 57: bellatrices . . . carinae. Tyrwhitt explains *shippes hoppesteres* as dancing ships, the noun *hoppesteres* which would mean female dancers being in apposition to *shippes*. "It is a well known fact that a ship, in most languages, is considered as a female." He deems the idea of a *ship dancing on the waves* less proper in this passage than is that conveyed by *bellatrici*. Skeat adds that Chaucer probably mistook the word *bellatrices* in Statius or the corresponding word *bellatrici* for *ballatrices* or *ballatrici*. See his valuable note.

"The carter over-riden with his carte,  
Under the wheel ful lowe he lay adoun" (2022 f.).

*Tes.* VII. 37: *i vôtî carri, li volti guastati*. *Theb.* VII. 58: *et vacui currus protritaque curribus ora*. Through Boccaccio is here translating Statius, his line is rather indefinite because he has neglected *curribus* and because *guastati* is not, like *protrita*, suggestive of trampling down and grinding into the dust. Chaucer is probably following Statius who makes it clear that the two halves of the line are to be taken together.

Statius waives further enumeration with the comprehensive terms *adeo vis omnis et omne Vulnus* (VII. 59). Chaucer with these words in mind adds (A. 2024):

"Ther were also of Martes divisioun. . ."

Cf. *Tes.* VII. 37: *Ed ogni forza cogli aspetti elati Ogni fedita ancor si vedea lici*.

"The statue of Mars up-on a carte stood,  
Armed, and loked grim as he were wood" (2041 f.).

*Tes.* VII. 37: *E 'n ogni loco nell' aspetto fiero Si vedea Marte torbido ed altiero*. *Theb.* VII. 60: *Ubique ipsum, sed non usquam ore remisso Cernere erat*. VII. 70: *ipse subit curru*.

"With sotil pencil was depeynt this storie,  
In redoutinge of Mars and of his glorie" (2049 f.).

Kölbing (*Engl. Studien* II. 528) has pointed out that the



adjective *sotil* is taken from Boccaccio *Tes.* vii. 38: E tal ricetta edificato avea Mulcibero *sotttil* Colla sua arte. *Theb.* vii. 61: talem *divina* Mulciber *arte* Ediderat, said of the images of Mars upon the walls of his Thracian temple.

Chaucer represents not only the embossed work in Statius' temple (*Theb.* vii. 62); but also the surroundings, its exterior and interior appearance together with the personified abstractions (*Theb.* vii. 47 ff.) as *peynted* illusively upon the wall of the temple in Theseus' lists.

That Chaucer combined sources in lines A. 1967-2050, as he did at the beginning of the Tale, is indicated by certain elements of his description which do not appear in that of Boccaccio, but which can be accounted for by referring to Statius: A. 1981 "And downward from an hille;" cf. *averso* . . . sub *Haemo* (*Theb.* vii. 42). The gloss *impetus* written above *rese* (A. 1985) in the Ellesmere and Hengwrt mss. is taken from the *Thebaid* (vii. 47). With *first* (A. 1995), cf. *primis* . . . e *foribus* (vii. 47). Cf. also A. 2027 f. with *Theb.* vii. 55:

"And al above, depeynted in a tour,  
Saw I conquest sittinge in greet honour;"

*fastigia templi insignibant gentes.*

Though Chaucer has followed Boccaccio much more closely than Statius, yet he could not have given us such a clear account if he had not used Statius as a commentary on Boccaccio.

"Ther maistow seen coming with Palamoun  
Ligurge him-self, the grete king of Trace" (2128 f.).

But for the prominence of Lyeurgus, father of Opheltes, in the *Thebaid* (Bks. iv., v. and vi.), he would not have appeared at Theseus' tournament in the *Teseide*, and consequently not in the *K. T.* *Tes.* vi. 14: Il primo venne ancora lagrimoso Per la morte di Ofelte a ner vestito Il re Licurgo; cf. *Theb.* iv. 741. Chaucer, however, led astray by his desire to go back to sources, has confused this Lyeurgus, who was *ductor Nemaee* (*Theb.* v. 733), with another king of the same name who ruled in Thrace

and was inimical to Bacchus. *Theb.* vii. 178: Quo sacra tamen ritusque peremptae Gentis et, in tumulos si quid male feta reliquit Mater, abire iubes? *Thracen silvasque Lycurgi?* Cf. *Theb.* iv. 386. Chaucer naturally supposed that Statius was in every case speaking of the same Lycurgus. Professor Skeat, too, fails to distinguish the two Lycurgi. See his note on this passage and also on the *Legend* 2423.

Chaucer, describing Lycurgus, says (2140):

"In-stede of cote-armure over his harnays,  
With nayles yelwe and brighte as any gold,  
He hadde a beres skin, col-black, for-old."

Henry Ward indicates that this is taken from the *Teseide* vi. 22: ma legato D' orso un velluto cuoio con lucenti Unghioni al collo. Chaucer and Boccaccio here have in mind the ancient practice of gilding an animal's claws with gold when its hide was worn as a cloak. Cf. *Theb.* vi. 697: Tum genitus Talao victori tigrin inanem Ire iubet, fulvo quae circumfusa Margine et extremos auro mansuerat unguis. Cf. further *Theb.* ix. 685 f. and *Tes.* vi. 36.

On the morning of the day upon which Emelye's husband was to be decided by the fortune of knightly battle, she went to the temple of Diana to sacrifice, and to enlist the aid of the virgin goddess (2289):

"Hir brighte heer was kempt, untressed al;  
A coroune of a grene ook cerial  
Up-on hir heed was set ful fair and mete.  
Two fyres on the auter gan she bete."

Cf. *Tes.* vii. 72: *E biondi crini dalli vel scoprissi.* vii. 74: *E coronò di quercia cereale*, Fatta venire assai pietosamente, Tututto il tempio, e 'l suo capo altrettale . . . Sopra l' altare, molto reverente *Due roghi fece* di simil grossezza. Chaucer is following Boccaccio's account of Emelye's actions and in preference to telling us just what sacrifices (*Tes.* vii. 75 and 76) she offered after kindling the fires and before invoking the goddess, he simply adds:

"And dide hir thinges, as men may biholde  
In *Stace of Thebes*, and thise bokes olde" (2293 f.).

It will be shown below that this reference is given in good faith.<sup>1</sup> Chaucer wished to give at length Emelye's prayer; and he accordingly resumed Boccaccio's story (vii. 77), elaborating after his own manner the outlines taken from his original. By *hir thinges* Chaucer probably means such sacrificial rites as Boccaccio describes, *Tes.* vii. 75: *Quindi con pia man v' accese il foco E quel di vino e di latte innafiato, Per tre fiate temperò un poco: E poi l' incenso prese, e seminato Sopra di quello riempiè il loco Di fummo assai soave in ogni lato: E poi si fe' più tortore recare, e 'l sangue lor sopra 'l fuoco spruzzare.* vii. 76: *E molte bianche agnelette bidenti Elatte al modo antico ed isvenate Si fe' recare avanti alle sue genti, E tratti loro cuori e le curate, Ancor gli caldi spiriti battenti, Sopra gli accesi fuochi l' ha posate: E cominciò pietosa nell' aspetto Così a dir come appresso fia detto.* Perhaps Boccaccio's *elatte al modo antico* accounts for Chaucer's reference to old books; but he knew whereof he spoke when he said such sacrifices are described in the *Thebaid*.

The Stygian rites performed by Tiresias and his daughter Manto in order to forecast the event of the Theban war (*Theb.* iv. 443 ff.) are similar to those performed by Emilia in the stanzas above quoted. *Wine, milk, honey, and blood* are poured into a hole dug in the ground (iv. 451 ff.) instead of being sprinkled upon the fire. Then three *fires are built for Hecate*, as many for the Furies, one for Pluto, and one for Persephone

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Prof. Skeat's note: "*In Stace of Thebes*, in the *Thebaid* of Statius, where the reader will not find it."

Liddell says: "Chaucer seems anxious that the reader shall consider Statius as his authority rather than Boccaccio. It is a common trick of his to mislead the serious-minded student. He is really following the *Teseide* vii. 76-90." Such a charge is often made. I believe Chaucer was honest in his references to his sources. Indeed, he was scholarly in his method. He is here referring to the only instance of a suppliant's visit to a shrine of Diana in the *Thebaid*, and he was aware that Boccaccio was indebted to the same passage.



(456 f.). Then the *entrails of black sheep and cattle, still quivering with life are burned* (466 f.). After Manto has performed these sacrifices, Tiresias *invokes Hecate*, Pluto and Tisiphone (473 f.). Similarly Emilia sacrifices, then offers her prayer: O Dea, a cui la terra e 'l cielo e 'l mare, E' regni di Pluton son manifesti, Qualor ti piace di que' visitare (*Tes.* VII. 77). The three hearths built for Hecate (*Theb.* IV. 456) would suggest to Boccaccio that he mention the three abodes of Diana (VII. 77; cf. Verg. *Aen.* IV. 511). Most noteworthy is the fact that the rites performed by Emelye combine worship and augury just as do those performed by Tiresias. Cf. A. 2355-7 and *Tes.* VII. 89.

Chaucer probably knew also that Boccaccio was dependent upon another passage in Statius for hints of the description of Emilia's preparations to sacrifice as well as for the main features of her prayer. This passage records the actions of Atalanta on the morning of the day her son Parthenopaeus was slain (*Theb.* IX. 570 ff.). Indeed, lines 2273-4 indicate that Chaucer made direct use of the same passage, since Boccaccio gives no time setting to the worship of Emilia:

"Up roos the sonne, and up roos Emelye  
And to the temple of Diane gan hye."

Cf. *Theb.* IX. 604: *Armigeræ ruit ad delubra Dianæ Rore sub Eoo*. However, Chaucer may have transferred the time of Palemon's prayer to Emelye's. *Tes.* VII. 68: *Stetesi adunque, mentre il mondo chiuso Tenne Apollo di luce*, Palemone Dentro dal tempio sagrato rinchiuso Continovo in divota orazione.

"Smoking the temple, ful of clothes faire,  
This Emelye, with herte debonaire,  
Hir body wessh with water of a welle" (2281-3).

*Tes.* VII. 72: E poi, in loco a poche manifesto, *Di fontano liquore il delicato Corpo lavossi*. *Theb.* IX. 602: *Ergo ut in amne nefas merso ter crine piavit*; cf. IX. 573: *Ante diem gelidas ibat Ladonis ad undas Purgatura malum fluvio vivente soporem*. Atalanta purifies herself before going to the temple,



whereas Emelye has servants carry spring water to the temple. With *heer . . . untressed* (A. 2289) cf. *Crine dato passim plantisque ex more solutis* (*Theb.* ix. 572).

"Whan kindled was the fyr, with pitous chere  
Un-to Diane she spak, as ye may here.  
'O chaste goddess of the wodes grene,  
To whom bothe hevene and erthe and see is sene.' . . ."  
(2295-8).

*Tes.* vii. 78: Quivi chinata stette assai pensosa Poi la dirizzò tutta lagrimosa. vii. 79: *E cominciò con rotta voce a dire, O casta Dea, de' boschi lustratrice* La qual ti fai a vergini seguire; cf. vii. 77: *O Dea, a cui la terra e 'l cielo e 'l mare, E' regni di Pluton son manifesti.* *Theb.* ix. 606: Tunc limina divae Adstitit et tali nequiquam voce precatur: *Virgo potens nemorum*, cuius non mollia signa Militiamque truce[m] sexum indignata frequento . . . ; cf. ix. 627: *nemoralis Delia*; vi. 611: *Diva potens nemorum.* x. 365: *Arcanae moderatrix Cynthia noctis, Si te tergeminis perhibent variare figuris Numen* et in silvas alio descendere vultu.

"I am, thou woost, yet of thy companye,  
A mayde, and love hunting and venerye,  
And for to walken in the wodes wilde,  
And noght to been a wyf, and be with childe" (2307-10).

*Tes.* vii. 81: *Io sono ancora delle tue ischiere Vergine*, assai più atta alla faretra, Ed a' boschi cercare, che a piacere Per amore a marito. *Theb.* ix. 616: *Sic quoque venatrix animoque innupta remansi*; cf. ix. 585-92 and 613.

"And fro me turne away hir hertes so . . .  
And if so be thou wolt not do me grace . . .  
As sende me him thát most desireth me" (2318 ff.).

*Tes.* vii. 82: *Attuta* gli aspri e focosi vapori Che accendono il disio che sì m' affeta De' giovanetti di me amadori. vii. 83: *E se i fati pur m' hanno riservata a giunonica legge sattostare.* vii. 85: *Fa' che e' venga nelle braccia mia Colui a cui più con voler m' accosto E che con più fermezza me disia.* *Theb.* ix. 624. *Da visere belli Victorem, vel, si ampla peto, da visere*

tantum! Thus both Atalanta and Emelye make alternative petitions.

"And at the brondes ende out-ran anoon  
As it were bloody drops many oon" (2339 f.).

*Tes.* VII. 92: *E parean sangue gli accesi tizzoni Daccapo spenti, tututti gemendo Lagrime ta' che spegneano i carboni.* *Theb.* IX. 596: *Rorantes sanguine ramos Expirare solo.*

"Among the goddes hye it is affermed,  
And by eterne word write and confermed (2349 f.).

*Tes.* VII. 89: *È già nel cielo tra gl' iddii fermato.* VII. 85: *E se gl' Iddii fors' hanno già disposto Con eterna parola.* *Theb.* IX. 652: *Utinam indulgere precanti Fata darent!* IX. 661: *Non hoc mutabile fatum,* says Apollo to Diana concerning the inevitable death of Parthenopaeus.

"And forth she wente, and made a vanisslinge" (2360).

*Tes.* VII. 90: *ma isnella Ciascuna a' boschi ginne onde venette.* *Theb.* IX. 637: *Illam diva ferox etiamnum in limine sacro Expositam et gelidas verrentem crinibus aras linquit.*

Compare: The bittre teres that on my chekes falle (2327); Di lagrime bagnò la faccia bella (*Tes.* VII. 78); Fletuque soluto (*Theb.* IX. 635). Hunteresse (2347), le saette della faretra di Diana (*Tes.* VII. 90), venatrix (*Theb.* IX. 616).

From the citations above it appears that both Emelye and Atalanta go to worship Diana because they are in great trouble on the morning of a day that is to bring misfortune. Each purifies herself by washing in water of a stream. Both perform their rite with hair untressed. Emelye addresses Diana as *chaste goddesses of the wodes grene*; Atalanta begins her prayer: *Virgo potens nemorum*. In their prayers both worshippers make known their desire to live unmarried, and speak of their favorite pastime of hunting, *i. e.*, they are faithful devotees of the goddess. Both pray that impending evil may be averted; and make an alternative request in case the first should not be granted. Emelye saw drops of blood run out

from the quenched brands of the altar fire (2339); Atalanta, in her foreboding dream of the previous night, saw the branches of an oak sacred to Diana broken and blood dripping from them. In either case, death was portended by the omen. The first request in both prayers was contrary to the decree of fate. In both instances the goddess, after hearing the prayer, vanished while the suppliant was still at the altar.

"That other fyr was queynt, and al agon" (2336).

To show that this was an evil omen, Skeat quotes Statius *Theb.* viii. 630: *Turbata repente Omnia cernebam, subitusque intercidit ignis. . . Quenam haec dubia praesagia cladis?* where *ignis* is the nuptial torch. Chaucer's source is the *Teseide* vii. 92 quoted above (l. 2339).

"O stronge god, that in the regnes colde  
Of Trace honoured art, and lord y-holde" (2373 f.).

*Tes.* vii. 24: *O forte Iddio, che ne' regni nevosi Bistonii servi le tue sacre case.* Cf. the note to A. 1973.

"For thilke peyne, and thilke hote fyr,  
In which thou whylom brendest for desyr,  
Whan thou usedest the grete beautee  
Of fayre yonge fresshe Venus free,  
And haddest hir in armes at thy wille,  
Al-though thee ones on a tyme misfille  
Whan Vulcanus had caught thee in his las,  
And fond thee ligging by his wyf, allas!" (2383-90).

*Tes.* vii. 25: *Per quella pietade Ch' ebbe Nettuno, allor che con disio Di Citerea usavi la biltade, Rinchiuso da Vulcano, ad ogni Iddio Fatto palese; umilmente ti prego Che alli miei preghi tu non facci niego.* *Theb.* ii. 269: *Lemnius haec ut prisca fides, Mavortia longum Furta dolens, capto postquam nil obstat amoris Poena nec ultrices castigavero catenae, Harmoniae dotale decus sub luce iugali Struxerat.* iii. 271: *conubia caelo festa; Lemniacae . . . catenae.* Cf. ix. 821.

"And in thy temple I wol my baner honge,  
And alle the armes of my companye;  
And evere-mo, unto that day I dye,  
Eterne fyr I wol biforn thee finde" (2410-13).

*Tes.* VII. 28: *I templi tuoi eterni s'orneranno Dell' armi del mio vinto compagnone, Ed ancora le mie vi penderanno, E fievi designata la cagione: Eterni fuochi sempre vi arderanno.* The vow which Arcite promises to pay to Mars if he wins Emelye in the tourney is similar to that which Tydeus made to Pallas, saying that he would perform it in the event of his victory at Thebes (*Theb.* II. 732-40); cf. especially: *figamque superbis Arma tholis, quaeque ipse meo quaesita revexi Sanguine, quaeque dabis captis, Tritonia, Thebis* (733-5); *pervigilemque focus ignem longaeva sacerdos Nutriet* (739 f.).

"And eek to this avow I wol me binde:  
My berd, myn heer that hongeth long adoun,  
That never yet ne felte offensoun  
Of rasour nor of shere, I wol thee yive" (2414-17).

This promise also made to Mars by Arcite has several parallels in the *Thebaid*. Similarly Adrastus had promised his hair and beard to Jove in case value should be received. In his disappointment and grief, he sacrificed his beard to the manes of his son and upbraided Jove (*Theb.* VI. 178-86). Hypanis had vowed his beard to Phoebus, Polites his hair to Bacchus if granted safe return from war (*Theb.* VIII. 491). Parthenopaeus had made a similar futile vow to Diana (*Theb.* VI. 585). Chaucer's source is *Tes.* VII. 28: *E la barba e i meie crin che offensione Di ferro non sentiron, ti prometto.*

"The voys of peple touchede the hevene;  
So loude cryden they with mery stevene" (2561 f.).

This description of loud applause is a classical commonplace. Cf. *Theb.* III. 593: *It clamor ad auras*; III. 670: *Rursus fragor intonat ingens Hortantum et vasto subter volat astra tumultu.* Cf. further V. 143 and VI. 426. Chaucer, however, is translating *Tes.* VII. 14: *De' nobile e del popolo il romore Toccò le stelle, sì fu alto e forte.* Cf. *Anelida* 27.

"Out of the ground a furie infernal sterte,  
From Pluto sente, at requeste of Saturne,  
For which his hors for fere gan to turne,



*And leep asyde, and foundred as he leep;  
 And, er that Arcite may taken keep,  
 He pighte him on the pomel of his heed,  
 That in the place he lay as he were deed" (2684-90).*

Chaucer here adapts Boccaccio (*Tes.* ix. 4-9), who in turn has combined two passages in Statius, *Theb.* i. 89-120 and vi. 473-90, the latter of which represents a somewhat similar situation. During the chariot race at the funeral games of Archemorus, Phoebus, who desired to honor his priest with victory, raised from the ground a serpent-haired monster at the sight of which Arion, one of the horses yoked to Polynices' chariot, reared and plunged so that Polynices was thrown headlong to the ground and barely escaped alive. Thus in Statius, Boccaccio, and Chaucer a deity sends a fury to frighten a horse and give an unexpected turn to a contest.

*Tes.* ix. 5: Venne costei di ceraste crinita E di verdi idre li suoi ornamenti Erano, a cui in elisio la vita Riconfortata avea, li qua' lambenti Le sulfuree fiamme che uscita Di bocca, le cadeano puzzolenti, Più fiera la facieno: e questa Dea Di serpi scuriata in man tenea. Cf. *Theb.* i. 89: Inamoenum forte sedebat Cocyton iuxta, resoluta vertice crines Lambere sulphureas permiserat anguibus undas; i. 103: Centum illi stantes umbrabant ora cerastae Turba minax diri capitis. i. 107: Ingneus atro Ore vapor. i. 113: Haec vivo manus aera verberat hydro. Cf. further *Tes.* ix. 6 with *Theb.* i. 97 f. and 116 ff.

*Tes.* ix. 7: Costei nel chiaro dì rassicurata Non mutò forma, nè cangiò sembiente, Ma già nel campo tosto se n' è andata, Là dove Arcita correva festante: E orribile com' era fu parata Al corrente destrier tosto davante, Il qual per ispavento in piè levossi, Ed indietro cader tutto lasciossi. Cf. *Theb.* vi. 473: Anguicomam monstri effigiem, saevissima visu Ora, movet sive ille Erebo seu finxit in actu Temporis, innumera certe formidine cultum Tollit in astra nefas. vi. 479: Nam flavus Arion Ut vidit, saliere iubae, atque erectus in armus Stat. vi. 482: Ruit ilicet exul Aonius nexusque diu per terga volutus Exuit.

vi. 488: Tandem caligine mersum Erigit accursu comitum caput aegraque tollit Membra solo. *Tes.* ix. 8: (Arcita) che fu in forse allora della vita Abbandonar.

"Anon he was y-born out of the place  
With herte soor to Theseus paleys . . .  
For he was yet in memorie and alyve,  
And alway crying afer Emelye" (2694 ff.).

Skeat would compare *Theb.* viii. 636 ff., where Atys mortally wounded is carried to the royal palace in order that he may die in the presence of Ismene, his betrothed. *Theb.* viii. 641: Prima videt caramque tremens Iocasta vocabat Ismenen: namque hoc solum moribunda precatur Vox generi, solum hoc gelidis iam nomen inerrat Faucibus. It is doubtful whether Chaucer had Statius in mind, but Boccaccio may have had. Although Arcita is carried at once to the city; and does not, as in the *Teseide*, ride thither in a triumphal procession with Emelye beside him in his chariot, still Chaucer's lines are an adaptation of Boccaccio's insipid narrative (*Tes.* ix. 13-49). Cf. in order ix. 48, 13, 49, 25.

Three days after his fall, Arcite's condition became alarming. His death is described A. 2743-2808. Skeat says this passage is certainly imitated from Statius' account of the death of Atys (*Theb.* viii. 636-654). The extent of the resemblance is that a lover fatally injured calls for his betrothed and dies in her presence, with his gaze fixed upon her face, his last word being her name. Cf. *Theb.* viii. 642: Ismenen: namque hoc solum moribunda precatur Vox generi, solum hoc gelidis iam nomen inerrat Faucibus. viii. 646: Quater iam morte sub ipsa Ad nomen visus defectaque fortiter ora Sustulit; illam unam neglecto lumine caeli Aspicit et vultu non exsatiatur amato. He sendeth after Emelye (A. 2762).

"Dusked his eyen two, and failled breeth.  
But on his lady yet caste he his yē;  
His laste word was, 'mercy, Emelye!'" (A. 2806).

Here, too, Chaucer is dependent rather upon Boccaccio, who in

turn may have had in mind the death of Atys. Cf. *Tes.* x. 111: E in verso Emilia i suoi occhi s' aprìro Mirando lei. x. 112: Addio Emilia, e più oltre non disse.

Egeus  
 "No man mighte gladden Theseus,  
 Savinge his olde fader Egeus,  
 That knew this worldes transmutacioun . . . " (2837-9).  
 "Right as ther deyed never man' quod he,  
 'That he ne livede in erthe in som degree,  
 Right so *ther livede never man*,' he seyde,  
 'In al this world, that som tyme he ne deyde.  
 This world nis but a thurghfare ful of wo.'" (2843-7).

The role of comforter is here assumed by Egeus just as it is by Adrastus at Archemorus' funeral. The philosophic balm applied by both is much the same. Cf. *Theb.* vi. 46: Solatur Adrastus Alloquiis genitorem ultro, nunc *fata recensens* resque *hominum duras et inexorabile pensum*. However, Chaucer is here adapting Boccaccio (*Tes.* 9-12), who has elaborated the passage in the *Thebaid*. Cf. particularly *Tes.* xi. 12 with *Theb.* vi. 51-53:

"Anzi così l'udivan, come il mare  
 Tirren turbato ascolta i naviganti,  
 O come folgor che scenda dall' are  
 Per nuvoletti teneri ovvianti  
 Dall' impeto suo cura di ristare,  
 Ma gli apre e scinde, e lor lascia fumanti:

Ille quoque adfatus non mollius audit amicos,  
 Quam trucidis Ionii rabies clamantia ponto  
 Vota virum aut tenues curant vaga fulmina nimbos."

*Tes.* xi. 9: *Niuno potea racconsolar Teseo*; xi. 10: Ma (Egeo) come savio, ed uom che conoscea. *I mondan casi e le cose avvenute . . .* per dare esempio a chiunque il veda. Di confortarsi delle cose sute. x. 11: Ed ingegnossi con parole alquanto . . . Di voler temperare il tristo pianto. Ricordando le cose antiche e vere. Le morti e' mutamenti e 'l duolo e 'l canto. L'un dopo l'altro spesso ognun vedere. Lines A. 2843-46, corresponding to *inexorabile pensum* are taken from the *Tes.* xii. 6.

Lines A. 2863-2962 correspond to the *Teseide* xi. 13-67 which in turn is based on Statius' description of the funeral rites and games in honor of Archemorus (*Theb.* vi.). Upon considering an appropriate place of burial for Arcite, Theseus decided that in the grove where the lovers had fought their duel, +unc

"He wolde make a fyr, in which thoffice  
Funeral he mighte al accomplice" (2863 f.).

*Tes.* xi. 13: Ma pensò che nel bosco, ove rancura. Aver sovente soleva d'amore. *Faria comporre il rogo, dentro al quale. L'ufficio, si compiesse funerale.* *Theb.* vi. 1: Nuntia multivago Danaas perlabitur urbes. Fama gradu, sancire novo sollemnia busto. Inachidas ludumque super.

"And leet comaunde anon to hakke and hewe  
The okes olde, and leye hem on a rewe  
In colpons wel arrayed for to brenne;  
His officeres with swifte feet they renne  
And ryde anon at his comaundement" (2865-69).

*Tes.* xi. 14: *E comandò ch' una selva, che stava A quel bosco vicina vecchia molto, Fosse tagliata, e ciò che bisognava Per lo solenne rogo fosse accolto . . . Mossonsi allora gli ministri tosto Per far ciò che Teseo loro avie imposto.* *Theb.* vi. 79: Parte alia gnari monitis exercitus instat Auguris aeriam truncis nemorumque ruina Montis opus cumulare pyram, quae crimina caesi Anguis et infausti cremet atra piacula belli. Sternitur extemplo veteres incaedua ferro Silva comas . . . stat sacra senectae Numine, nec solus hominum transgressa veterno Fertur avos, Nymphas etiam mutasse superstes Faunorumque greges.

"And after this, Theseus hath y-sent  
After a bere, and it al over-spradde  
With cloth of gold, the richest that he hadde.  
And of the same suyte he cladde Arcite;  
Upon his hondes hadde he gloves whyte;  
Eek on his heed a croune of laurer grene,  
And in his hond a swerd ful bright and kene" (2870-76).

*Tes.* xi. 15: *El fece poi un feretro venire Reale a sè davanti, e*



*tosto fello D' un drappo ad or bellissimo fornire, E similmente ancor fece di quello Il morto Arcita tutto rivestire, E poi il fece a giacer porre in ello Incoronato di frondi d' alloro, Con ricco nastro rilegate d' oro. Theb. vi. 54: Tristibus interea ramis teneraque cupresso Damnatus flammae torus et puerile feretrum Texitur. vi. 62: Summa crepant auro, Tyrioque attollitur ostro Molle supercilium. The following lines, which Kohlmann excludes from his text, may have suggested A. 2876 to Chaucer: Spes avidae! quas non in nomen credula vestes Urgebat studio cultusque insignia regni Purpureos sceptrumque minus? (vi. 79).*

*"And for the peple sholde seen him alle,  
Whan it was day, he broughte him to the halle,  
That roreth of the crying and the soun" (2879-87).*

*Tes. xi. 16: E poichè fu d' ogni parte lucente Il nuovo giorno, egli 'l fece portare Nella gran corte, ove tutta la gente Come voleva il potea riguardare. xi. 30: Ogni parte era già piena di pianto; E già l' aula regia mugghiava. Theb. vi. 25: Clara laboriferos caelo Tithonia currus Extulerat vigilesque deae pal-lentis habenas; et Nox et cornu fugiebat Somnus inani; Iam plangore viae, gemitu iam regia mugit Flebilis. Cf. vi. 42.*

*"Tho cam this woful Theban Palamoun,  
With flotery berd, and ruggy asshy heres,  
In clothes blake, y-dropped al with teres" (2882-4).*

*Tes. xi. 30: E Palemone di lugubre manto Coperto nella corte si mostrava Con rabbuffata barba e tristo crine, E polveroso ed aspro senza fine. Theb. vi. 30: Sedet ipse exutus honoro Vittarum nexu genitor squalentiaque ora Sparsus et incultam ferali pulvere barbam.*

*"And, passing othere of weping, Emelye,  
The rewfulleste of al the companye" (2885 f.).*

*Tes. xi. 31: E sopra 'l corpo misero d' Arcita Non men dolente Emilia piangea, Tutta nel viso palida e smarrita, E' circostanti più pianger facea. Theb. vi. 33: Asperior contra planc-*

*tusque egressa viriles* Extemplo famulas premit hortaturque volentes Orba parens. Eurydice is the prototype of Emilia as Lyeurgus is of Palemon.

"In as muche as *the service sholde be*  
*The more noble and riche in his degree,*  
*Duk Theseus leet forth three stedes bringe,*  
*That trapped were in steel al gliteringe,*  
*And covered with the armes of daun Arcite.*  
*Up-on thise stedes, that weren grete and whyte,*  
*Ther seten folk, of which oon bar his sheeld,*  
*Another his spere up in his hondes heeld;*  
*The thridde bar with him his bowe Turkeys,*  
*Of brend gold was the cas, and eek the harneys "* (2887-96).

*Tes. XI. 36: Ed acciochè Teseo intero segno Del nobil sangue*  
*desse di costui . . . XI. 35: Quivi cavalli altissimi guardati*  
*Per lui furon coverti nobilmente. E su vi fur delle sue arme*  
*armati Sovra ciascuno un nobile sergente . . . Quivi faretre*  
*ed archi con saette, E più sue vesti nobili e dilette. Theb. VI.*  
*72: Inde ingens lacrimis honor et miseranda voluptas, Mune-*  
*raque in cineres annis graviora feruntur (Namque illi et*  
*pharetras brevioraque tela dicareat Festinus voti pater inson-*  
*tesque sagittas; Iam tunc et nota stabuli de gente probatos In*  
*nomen pascebat equos) cinctusque sonantes Armaque maiores*  
*expectatura lacertos.*

*The nobleste of the Grekes that ther were*  
*Upon hir shuldres carieden the bere,*  
*With slakke pas, and eyen rede and wete "* (2899-2901).

*Tes. XI. 38: Sopra le spalle li Greci maggiori Il feretro levarsi*  
*lagrimando, E con esso d'Atene usciron fuori. Theb. VI. 121:*  
*Longo post tempore surgit Colla super iuvenum (numero dux*  
*legerat omni) Ipse fero clamore torus.*

"Up-on the right hond wente old Egeus,  
 And on that other syde duk Theseus,  
 With vessels in hir hand of gold ful fyn,  
 Al ful of honey, milk, and blood, and wyn " (2905-08).

*Tes. XI. 37: Li più nobili Achivi i vasi cari Di mel, di sangue*

*e di latte novello Pieni portavan con lamenti amari* Sopra le braccia precedendo quello. *Theb.* vi. 119: *Portant inferias arsuraque fercula primi Graiorum.* What was carried on these fercula was put to use later; cf. vi. 195: *Pallentique croco strident ardentia mella Spumantes mero paterae verguntur et atri Sanguinis et rapti gratissima cymbia lactis.* Chaucer's addition of *wyn* indicates that he was comparing Statius and Boccaccio.

"Eek Palamon, with ful greet companye;  
And after that cam woful Emelye . . ." (2909 f.).

Even the order of the procession comes from Statius through the *Teseide* (xi. 40). Cf. *Theb.* vi. 123: *Cinxere Lycurgum Lernaei proceres, genetricem mollior ambit Turba.*

"Heigh labour, and ful greet apparailinge  
Was at the service and the fyr-makinge,  
That with his grene top the heven raughte" (2913-15).

*Tes.* xi. 18: *Alta fatica e grande s'apparecchia*, Cioè voler l'antico suol mostrare All' alto Febo della selva vecchia, La qual Teseo comandò a tagliare Si andasse, *acciò ch' una pira parecchia* Alla stata d' Ofelte *possan fare*: E, se si puote, ancor la vuol maggiore, In quanto fu più d' Arcita il valore. By this comparison of Arcita's pyre with that of Opheltes, Boccaccio gives Chaucer a clew to his model. *Tes.* xi. 26: *Adunque fu degli alberi tagliata Un rogo fatto mirabilmente* Poco più furo i monti accumulati Sopra Tessaglia dalla folle gente *In verso 'l ciel* mattamente levati, *Che fosse quivi quel rogo eminente.* *Theb.* vi. 79: *Parte alia gnari monitis exercitus instat Auguris aeriam truncis nemorumque ruina Montis opus cumulare pyram.*

"But how the fyr was maked up on highte,  
And eek the names how the treës highte,  
As ook, firre, birch, asp, *alder, holm,* popler,  
Wilow, *elm,* plane, *ash,* box, chasteyn, lind, laurer,  
Mapul, thorn, *beeck,* hasel, *ew,* whippeltree,  
How they weren feld, shal nat be told for me" (2919-24).

Of the trees in this list, the following are mentioned by both Statius (*Theb.* vi. 91-9) and Boccaccio (*Tes.* xi. 22-24):

“ook, caoni, escoli, cerri, Chaonium nemus, robur;  
firre, abete, abies;  
holm, ilici, iliacae trabes;  
elm, olmo, ulmus;  
ash, orni,<sup>1</sup> frassini, orni, fraxinus;  
beech, faggi, fagus;  
ew, tasso, taxus;  
alder, auno, alnus.

*Procumbunt piceae*

Boccaccio names further *lind* and *hasel* (*tigli* and *corilo*). The rest were added by Chaucer. Cf. the note on *Parl.* 176, p. 65, also Skeat's note to A. 2863.

“*Ne how the goddes ronnen up and doun,  
Disherited of hir habitacioun,  
In which they woneden in reste and pees,  
Nymphes, Faunes, and Amadrides*” (2925-8).

*Tes.* xi. 25: Donde la Terra sconcolato pianto Ne diede, e quindi ciascun altro *iddio De' luoghi amati si parti* intanto, Dolente certo, e contra suo disio; E l'arbitro dell' ombre Pan, che tanto Quel luogo amava, e *ciascun* Semidio E' lor parenti. *Theb.* vi. 103: *Linguunt flentes dilecta locorum Otia cana Pales* Silvanusque arbiter umbrae *Semideumque pecus, migrantibus* adgemit illis Silva, nec amplexae dimittunt robora *Nymphae*. Chaucer here follows Statius rather than Boccaccio. *Dilecta locorum otia* is rendered by “*habitacioun*, in which they woneden in *rest* and *pees*.” Cf. *Theb.* vi. 88 and *Tes.* xi. 20.

“*Ne how the bestes and the briddes alle  
Fledden for fere, whan the wode was falle*” (2929-31).

*Tes.* xi. 21: Al miserabil loco soprastava *Tagliamento continovo*, del quale Ogni si vide che vi stava; *E fuggì quindi ciascun*

<sup>1</sup> Boccaccio gives his ash-trees an anomalous property by mistranslating his original. *Tes.* xi. 23: E gli *orni pien di pece*, nutrimenti D' ogni gran fiamma. *Theb.* vi. 93: *Procumbunt piceae*, flammis alimenta supremis Ornique.



*animale, Ed ogni ucello i suoi nidi lasciava, Temendo il mai più non sentito male. Theb. vi. 89: Aderat miserabile luco Excidium: fugere ferae, nidosque tepentes Absiliunt (metus urget) aves.*

“ *Ne how the fyr was couched first with stree,  
And than with drye stokkes cloven a three,  
And than with grene wode and spycerye,  
And than with cloth of gold and with perrye,  
And gerlandes hanging with ful many a flour,  
The mirre, thencens, with al so greet odour* ” (2933-38).

*Tes. xi. 27: El fu di sotto di strame selvaggio Agrestemente fatto, e di tronconi D' alberi grossi, e fu il suo spazio maggio; Poi fu di frondi di molte ragioni Tessuto, e fatto con troppo più saggio Avvedimento e di più condizioni Di ghirlande e di fiori pitturato: E questo suolo assai fu elevato. Tes. xi. 28: Sopra di questi l' arabe ricchezze, E quelle d' oriente con odori Mirabil fero delle lor belezze Il terzo suol composto sopra i fiori; Quivi lo incenso, il qual giammai vecchiezze Non conobbe, vi fu dato agli ardori, E 'l cennamo il qual più ch' altro è durante, Ed il legno aloè di sopra stante. Strophe 28 corresponds to spycerye, mirre, and encens, with al so greet odour.*

The *cloth of gold* (2936) is accounted for by *Tes. xi. 29: Poi fu la sommità di quella pira D'un drappo in ostro tirio con oro Tinto coperta. But as Boccaccio does not mention jewelry (perrye) in this connection, we have another indication that Chaucer had the Thebaid before him. Cf. gemmae l. 62 below.*

Boccaccio's stanzas (*Tes. xi. 27, 28*) are based on these lines of Statius (*Theb. vi. 56*): *Ima virent agresti stramina cultu, Proxima gramineis operosior area sertis, Et picturatus morituris floribus agger; Tertius adsurgens Arabum strue tollitur ordo Eoas complexus opes incanaque glebis Tura et ab antiquo durantia cinnama Belo. Summa crepant auro, Tyrioque attollitur ostro Molle supercilium, teretes hoc undique gemmae Inradiant.* Note that Statius is describing a bier, not a pyre as Boccaccio and Chaucer are. The materials, with the exception of the

*stokkes* and the *grene wode* added by Boccaccio, are more suitable for the bier. Absorption in his Italian original has here dulled Chaucer's sense of the artistic. It should be said further that *stree* (cf. A. 2918) is different from *agresti stramina cultu*, as is shown by *virent*.

"Ne how that Emelye, as was the gyse,  
Putte in the fyr of funeral servyse;  
Ne how she swowned whan men made the fyr" (2941-3).

These lines are based on Boccaccio (xi. 44), and were suggested by Statius (*Theb.* vi. 187): *Iam face subiecta primis in frondibus ignis: Exclamant (labor insanos arcere) parentes. Tes.* xi. 44: *Perchè al rogo fatta più vicina, Con debol braccio le fiamme vi mise, E per dolore indietro risupina Tra le le sue donne cadde. Cf. xi. 40, il foco feral. Theb.* vi. (184): *Sic fata repente Concidit, abruptisque obmutuit ore querellis.*

"Ne what she spak, ne what was her desyr" (2944).

As stated above, Eurydice is the prototype of the bereaved Emilia. The lament of the latter (*Tes.* xi. 41-3) bears some resemblance to that of the former (*Theb.* vi. 131-70).

"Ne what Ieweles men in the fyr tho caste,  
Whan that the fyr was greet and brente faste . . .  
And of hir vestiments, whiche that they were,  
And cuppes ful of wyn, and milk and blood,  
Into the fyr, that brente as it were wood" (2945-50).

*Tes.* xi. 50: *Le gemme crepitavano, e l' argento, Che ne' gran vasi e negli ornamenti era, Si frondea tutto, ed ogni vestimento Sudava d' oro nella fiamma fiera: E ciascun legno dell' assirio unguento Si facea grasso e con maggior lumiera: E' meli ardenti stridevano in esse, Con altre cose allora in quelle messe. xi. 48: Militari arme con altri gioielli E tutti su li vi fece salire. xi. 51: E le cratere di vini spumanti, E dell' oscuro sangue, e 'l grazioso Candido latte, tututti fumanti Sentieno ancora il foco ponderoso. Theb.* vi. 191: *Ditantur flammae; non unquam opulentior illic Ante cinis: crepitant gemmae, atque immane liquescit Argentum, et pictis exudat vestibibus aurum;*

Nec non Assyriis pinguescunt robora sucis, Pallentique croco strident ardentia mella, Spumantes mero paterae verguntur et atri Sanguinis et rapti gratissima cymbia lactis.

“Ne how som caste hir sheeld, and som hir spere” (2947).

*Tes.* xi. 56: Ed oltre a questo, *chi vi gittò freno*, Chi *lancia*, chi *iscudo* e qual balteo, Chi elmo e qual barbuta, e altri pieno Di saette turcasso e chi vi deo Archi e chi spade come me’ potieno. *Theb.* vi. 209: *Raptumque suis libamen ab armis Quisque iacit*, seu frena libet seu cingula flammis Mergere seu iaculum summae seu cassidis umbram.

“Ne how the Grekes with an huge route  
Thryës riden al the fyr aboute  
Up-on the left hand, with a loud shoutinge,  
And thryës with hir speres clateringe;  
And thryës how the ladies gonne crye” (2951-55).

*Tes.* xi. 52: Allor Egeo fe’ far di cavalieri Ischiere sette di dieci per una, *Armati tutti sopra gran destrieri*, E ciascheduno aveva indosso alcuna Sua sopravvesta qual’ era mestieri Di vestirlasi a quella festa bruna; Delle qua’ sette de’ Greci i maggiori Furono allora li conduttori. xi. 53: *E a sinistra man cortando giro*, Tre volte il rogo tutto intorniaro: E la polvere alzata il salir diro Delle fiamme piegava, e risonaro *Le lance ch’ alle lance si feriro*. xi. 54: *Dieron quell’ armi orribile fragore* Quattro fiate, ed altrettanto pianto *Le donne dier con misero dolore*, E colle palme ripercosse alquanto. *Theb.* vi. 198: Tunc septem numero turmas (*centenus ubique Surgit eques*) versis ducunt insignibus ipsi *Graiugenae reges*, lustrantque ex more sinistro Orbe rogam et stantes inclinant pulvere flammis. *Ter curvos egere sinus, inlisaque telis Tela sonant*, quater horrendum pepulere fragorem Arma, quater mollem famularum braccia planctum.

“Ne how Arcite is brent to asshen colde” (2957).

*Tes.* xi. 57: Il giorno inverso della notte andava *E Vulcan lasso in ceneri recate* Le cose avea che ciascun gli donava; Perchè con

acque, per ciò ordinate, Da' Greci il rogo già si saporava.  
*Theb.* vi. 212: *Finis erat, lassusque putres iam Mulciber ibat*  
*In cineres; instant flammis multoque soporant imbre rogam.*

“Ne how the Grekes pleye  
 The wake-pleyes, ne kepe I nat to seye;  
 Who wrastleth best naked, with oille enoynt,  
 Ne who that bar him best, in no disioynt” (2959-62).

Such is Chaucer's brief mention of the funeral games described in the *Teseide* (xi. 59-67). Boccaccio's description is imitated from Statius' lengthy account of the games in honor of Archemorus. (*Theb.* vi. 274-921). On the wrestling-match, see *Tes.* xi. 62 and *Theb.* vi. 801 ff. Cf. *uncta palestra* (*Tes.* xi. 62), *uncta pale* (*Theb.* vi. 805), *palaestras* (vi. 808), *postquam oleo gavisa cutis* (vi. 822); also *Tes.* xi. 67: *Ne' fatti giuochi assai ben si portaro.*

There can be little doubt that Chaucer in describing Arcite's funeral, as elsewhere in the *K. T.* (A. 859-996 and 1967-2050), compared Boccaccio with Statius, although he has in this instance left but slight traces of such comparison (cf. notes to ll. 2925, 2933). It will be observed that in these three descriptive portions of the *K. T.*, Chaucer has followed Boccaccio's outlines rather closely and that Boccaccio has, in turn, closely adapted Statius, even in translating certain passages.

### Group H.

“Pleyen he (Phebus) coude on every minstraleye,  
 And singen, that it was a melodye,  
 To heren of his clere vois the soun.  
 Certes the king of Thebes, *Amphioun*,  
 That with his singing walled that citee,  
 Coude never singen half so wel as he” (113-18).

*Tes.* iv. 13: *O Anfione, Se tu intanto che co' dolci canti Della tua lira, tocca con ragione Per chiuder Tebe, i monti circostanti Chiamasti, avessi immaginato questo, Forse ti sarie stato il suon molesto.* Amphion's feat of building the walls of



Thebes by his enchanting music is often referred to by Statius. *Theb.* x. 873: *Humilesne Amphionis arces, Pro pudor! hi faciles carmenque imbelli secuti, Hi (mentita diu Thebarum fabula) muri? Et quid tam egregium prosternere moenia molli Structa lyra?* Cf. i. 9; ii. 453 ff., and see the note to A. 1545.

## B. THROUGH LE ROMAN DE THÈBES.

A form of the Theban legend widely known in the middle ages was the Old French *Roman de Thèbes*,<sup>1</sup> whose anonymous author wrote about the middle of the 12th century (Constans, *Thèbes* ii., p. cxviii). This poem gave rise to a number of prose redactions in the Old French (Constans ii. cxxiii; also *Légende*, p. 315 ff.). Lydgate is known to have used such a prose *Thèbes* as the chief source of his *Story of Thèbes* (Koeppel, *Lydgate's Story of Thebes. Eine Quellenuntersuchung*, p. 65), and his master, Chaucer, in all probability, had access to the same source. However, an examination of Chaucer's poems indicates that he followed the poetical version rather than a prose redaction based on the poem. There were many mss. of the poetical *Roman*, and one of the five now extant (ms. Spalding) was written in England in Chaucer's day (Constans ii., p. xix).

### *The Thebaid-Thèbes Problem.*

The relation between the *Thebaid* and the *Roman de Thèbes* is a mooted question. Two opposing views have been advanced. Constans (ii., pp. cxix-xxii; *Légende*, p. 277) and F. M. Warren (*Mod. Lang. Assoc. Publicat.*, 1901, pp. 375-87) hold that there was a Latin prose version of the legend intermediate between the *Thebaid* and the *Thèbes*. Paul Meyer, in his review of Constans' edition, opposed this theory (*Romania* xxi,

<sup>1</sup> *Le Roman de Thèbes* publié d'après tous les manuscrits par Léopold Constans. Paris, 1890.

107). Criticising the preponderant authority given to MS. S. in constituting the text, he says: "Il résulte de ce classement que M. C. admet l'existence d'énormes interpolations, qui occupent une partie du second volume. Il en résulte encore que la leçon considérée par lui comme authentique est celle qui s'éloigne le plus de la *Thebaïde* de Stace. La leçon qui se rapproche le plus du poème latin serait due à un auteur 'légèrement pédant, qui altère la simplicité du poème primitif par des remaniements d'une érudition affectée' (p. lxiv). Pour expliquer que la rédaction première ait laissé de côté d'importants épisodes du latin, M. C. suppose que le poète a composé non d'après la *Thebaïde*, mais d'après une version en prose latine, texte de l'existence duquel on n'a d'ailleurs aucune notion. Cette hypothèse, visiblement imaginée pour les besoins de la cause, avait déjà soulevé des objections, lorsque M. C. l'avait présentée pour la première fois dans sa thèse. Elle reparait ici sans preuve nouvelle."

Warren says (p. 377): "The author of *Thèbes* rarely owns up to any literary obligation. He merely states he is translating a Latin book 'called Statius,' because laymen could not read Latin. Cf. Constans, *op. cit.*, II. 106, ll. 27-30:—

"Il le fist tout selonc la lètre  
Dont lai ne sévent entremètre;  
Et por chou fu li romans fais  
Que nel savoit hon ki fust lais."

Cf. II. 267, l. 19 f.:

"Et ke il fisent par grant grasse  
En un livre c'on di(s)t Estasse."

Between Statius' epic and the mediaeval story of love and combat there are differences which a translator would hardly have introduced. The mythology of the *Thebaid* is quite suppressed, also many of its episodes, while some which are retained in outline are recast and modified. Wholly new episodes of a romantic nature are inserted. And these changes are not the result of any failure on the part of the author of the *Roman*

*de Thèbes* to carefully copy the incidents of his sources. He reproduces enough of the details of Statius to show that he was not rhyming from memory. Besides in the passage already referred to, he says he is translating a text. . . This text, the direct source of the French poem, could not in all probability have been the *Thebaid* itself because of the changes and modifications which the story has undergone in the *Roman*."

My imperfect study of the problem inclines me to the view of Paul Meyer. The lines of the Old French quoted above by Professor Warren do not justify his inference. The author of the *Thèbes* does not say he *translates*, nor does he say anything about his own method; but he *describes his source*, a ms. of Estasse, as one written in Latin so that the *lai* could not understand it. Thus the lines quoted are not a statement about the method of composition followed by the author of the *Thèbes*, but they apply only to the author of a Latin ms. and attribute to him a purpose to write a book exclusively for the nobility. This description of the source as a book peculiarly suited to the nobility finds some basis in the *Thebaid*. A writer who wished to cater to the new French nobility might form the opinion that Statius did not write for the low-born (*vilains*, O. l. 18) from such passages as *Theb.* i. 463 ff., where Tydeus and Polyneices both proudly refer to their noble birth, also from the envoi in which Statius hopes the book may be well received by the emperor (xii. 814). Besides, the entire story is of a noble house (i. 17) and tells of the deeds of heroes (i. 41).

Let us consider the other direct references to Statius found in the various mss. of the *Thèbes*. Ms. C. 8905 refers to *Huitasses* (so ms. B. to *Huitasce*) as source for the terrible fate which overtook Capaneus.

"Hors des herberges en la plaigne  
S'en ist de Griex bele compaigne.  
Capaneüs li preuz les guie:  
Sor lui fu toute la baillie.      8900.  
Tout droit a la cité les meine,  
Mès mout i regut male estreine:  
Le jour fu morz en tël manière

Qui seur toutes autres fu fière,  
Si comme Huitasses le descrit, 8905  
Qui le voir en sot bien et dit.

Some seven hundred lines are then devoted to a vivid description of Capaneus' attack on Thebes, his scaling and rending the walls, his blasphemy and challenge to Jove, the council of the gods, and Capaneus' death by a thunderbolt. These lines are an elaboration of the *Thebaid* x. 827-936. Noteworthy is the mention in both accounts of a former attack on the ruler of Olympus (*Thèbes* 9589 C):

"Dès la bataille des jaianz  
Ne fu mès outrages si granz.

Cf. *Theb.* x. 909: Quænam spes hominum tumidae post proelia Phlegræ?

Noteworthy also is the fact that Capaneus, contemptor divum of the *Thebaid*, is portrayed fully in that character in mss. B. and C. of the *Thébes*. Cf. C. 9365 ff.:

"Ne dieu de ciel ne dieu de terre  
Ne pueent pas soffrir ma guerre.  
Dieu ne deesse n'est el monde  
Que ma destre main ne confonde.  
and 9353: Ja n'ai d'eus touz poor ne dote;  
Ja n'en iert si pleine la rote  
Que sempres desconfit ne soient,  
Et trestuit cil qui en eulz croient.  
Ma destre, m'espee, ma lance,  
Ce sont mi dieu, c'est ma creance."

Cf. *Theb.* III. 615: Virtus mihi numen et ensis, Quem teneo!

Statius is referred to as having described the manly sport of hurling the discus (ms. C. 2737):

"Forment redoutent icel jeu:  
Hom foibles n'i a point de leu.  
Si comme Estaces le raconte."

Variants: A com lestore, P Wistasses, BC estace. This characterization gives well the impression made by reading Statius' account (*Theb.* VI. 625 ff.), where we are told that five of the



contestants withdrew when they saw the immense discus chosen by Hippomedon.

The most noteworthy reference to Estace, because of consensus of all the mss., is *Thèbes* 7818, where is described a wonderful gold cup embossed with the image of the sphinx:

“Un guarnement avon ici:  
Cent mars d'argent vaut, que ne mente.  
A tant la cope li presente.  
Cil prent la cope, l'uevre mire:  
Nus hon n'en sèt la façon dire  
*Si com dit li livre d'Estace,*  
*Li pomeaus en fu d'un topace:*  
Onque nus hon ne vit son pér  
Ne si bien assis ne tant clér.”

This is the cup described 7795:

“Ma cope porte o tei d'or fin,  
Cele ou a peint el fonz un pin:  
En la cope a set mars et plus,  
Cinc el coverele de desus.”

The *uevre mire* thus referred to in all the mss. is no doubt the sacrificial patera from which Adrastus poured a libation on the occasion of a traditional quadrennial feast to Apollo. This patera, an heirloom of the royal line of Argos since the time of Phoroneus, was embossed in gold with mythological scenes in such splendor as to call forth one of the notable bits of description in the *Thebaid*:

“Postquam ordine mensae  
Victa fames, *signis perfectam auroque nitentem*  
*Iasides pateram* famulos ex more poposcit,  
Qua Danaus libare deis seniorque Phoroneus  
Adsueti. Tenet haec operum caelata figuras:  
Aureus anguicomam praesepto Gorgona collo  
Ales habet, iam iamque vagas (ita visus) in auras  
Exsilit; illa graves oculos languentiaque ora  
Paene movet vivoque etiam pallescit in auro.  
Hinc Phrigius fulvis venator tollitur alis,  
Gargara desidunt surgenti et Troai recedit,  
Stant maesti comites, frustra sonantia lassant  
Ora canes umbramque et nubila latrant  
Hanc undante mero fundens vocat ordine cunctos  
Caelicolas, Phoebum ante alios.” (I. 539 ff.).

The cover of the bowl is uniquely described by the author of the *Thèbes* as being of a single topaz (in all mss.; *tospasse* in P). The ms. of the *Thebaid* used by him may have read *Iaspidis pateram* instead of *Iasides pateram*; or—what is more likely—he may have mistaken *Iasides* as the name of a gem, by association with *iaspis*, just as he conversely (l. 5247) mistook *Culmina* of *Theb.* viii. 357 for a proper noun.

These are all the direct references to Statius. It will be noted that they are not limited to mss. B. and C., which are admitted by Constans (ii., p. lxiv, li, n., cxx, cxxi, n.) to be representative of a recension whose author made direct use of the *Thebaid*. In like manner every reference to the *story* is consistent with the *Thebaid* itself.

“ Li plus seingnor et li plus mestre  
Firent le jeu de la palest(r)e:  
Ce est uns jeux, ce dit l'estoire,  
Dont cil qui vaint a mout grant gloire ” (C 2695).

This statement is warranted by *Theb.* vi. 801. Cf. especially: *variae . . . laudes . . . Tydea magnanimum stimulis urgentibus augunt . . . Sed corde labores ante alios erat uncta pale. . . . Ergo ubi luctandi iuvenes animosa citavit Gloria, terrificos umeris Aetolus amictus Exultur patriumque suem.* Cf. *Thèbes* 2702: *Si se despoullent trestuit nu, palaestras* (*Theb.* vi. 808). *D'uile font bien lor cors enoindre* (*Thèbes* 2705); *postquam oleo gavisa cutis* (*Theb.* vi. 822).

“ Li quiex que puet son pér conquerre  
Tant que cheoir le fèt a terre  
Cil a le los et la coronne  
Et grant louier li rois li done.  
Ou par enging, ou par savoir,  
Couvient iluec victoire avoir ” (C 2709).

*Turpia signata* linquens *vestigia terra* *Palma* autem *dextra laeva*que *nitentia dono* (*Theb.* vi. 879 f.); *quaesita praemia laudum* (vi. 884); *Instat agens Tydeus fictumque in colla minatus crura subit* (vi. 851).

MS. A. 395 f. refers to the story for the manner of the death of Laius:

"C'a .j. seul cop son père ocist,  
Ensi comme l'estoire dist.

These lines, as well as the peculiar phraseology of O. 202 ff. quoted below, are explained by *Theb.* i. 64: trifidae in Phocidos arto Longaevum implicui regem *secuique* trementis *Ora senis*, dum quaero patrem.

"Danz Laius i fu ocis:  
La teste i ot le jor coupee,  
Et ne fu par autrui espee  
Que par l'espee de son fil" (O. 202 ff.).

Ms. S. reads: Le jor ot la teste colpe. Cf. S. 252: Si ad al rei le chief coupé.

Besides references to Estace and to the story, there are unique details which can be explained only on the assumption that the French author used a ms. of Statius. The unfilial conduct of his sons which causes Œdipus to invoke Jove and Tisiphone to avenge the crime, is the core of Statius' plot and is found in all mss. of the Thèbes.

"Andous ses ueuz, qu'il ont trovez,  
Desoz lor piez les ont folez" (O. 503 f.).  
Cf. "Dans Jupiter, qui mes dix iés,  
A toi depri mout coureciés,  
Toi et dame Tezifoné,  
Qu'en infer avés poesté;  
De mes enfans a vous me claim,  
Si com as dix que je mout aim,  
Que ambedeus les destruisiés,  
Car mes oex misent sos lor piés;  
Destruisiés les ou temple ou tart,  
Car felon sont de pute part." (A. 921 ff.)  
Cf. Ore sont mort andui li frère,  
Et pour le pechié de leur père,  
Que il onques nul jor n' amérent,  
Et pour ses euls qu'il defolèrent,  
Qu'il s'avoit trèt pour la dolor  
Que sa mère ot prise a oisour." (C. 9811 ff.)

*Theb.* i. 238: At nati (facinus sine more!) cadentes *calcavere oculos*.

In describing the beginning of the first battle, *Thèbes* (O.

4343 ff.) chooses four pairs of combatants from the *Thebaid* (vii. 632 ff).:

"Miceneon, Perifas; Menoeceus, Periphanta  
Ypomedon, Sibart; Hippomedon, Sybarin  
Parthonopeus, Itier; Parthenopaeus, Ityn  
Tydeus, Tenelaus de Sidogne; Tydeos, Sidonium Pterelan."

In both accounts the first named of each pair is victor.

Light is thrown on the relation between the *Thebaid* and the *Thèbes* by a comparison of the two descriptions of the Theban army as it issues from the seven gates of the city. Statius says of the division coming from the seventh gate (*Theb.* viii. 357):

"Culmina magnanimus stipat Dircaea Menoeceus."

The author of the *Thèbes*, after assigning the same leaders as Statius does to the several hosts that go out from the first six gates, when he comes to the seventh gate (properly the Dircean) curiously calls it *Culmes* (*Thèbes* 5247):

"*Culmes ot non la setme porte:*  
*Desus ot une tor mout forte;*  
*Par cele porte dareraine*  
*Vait on a Dirce la fontaine,*  
*Et vait chacier en la forest*  
*Li reis de Thèbes, quant li plaist.*  
*Menecetis ést de la vile*  
*Par cele porte, et sont set mile."*

Variants for *Culmes*, which is the reading of S, are: BCP *Pulmes*, A *Erimes*. The strong tower which defends this gate is mentioned at *Thebaid* x. 651: Dircaea . . . turre; and there too Menoeceus is at his post.

Undoubtedly this mistake in the name of the seventh gate was made originally by an author who had the *Thebaid* before him; and, if there are versions between *Statius* and him of the *Roman*, the mistake has been copied blindly. Since the author of the *Thèbes* adds that men go out to the fountain Dirce by way of this gate, thus adding to his unique mistake a second feature accounted for by this line of Statius, it seems likely that he had the *Thebaid* before him and mistook *Culmina* for



the name of the gate. These seven gates and their defenders mentioned in proper order with a unique variant detail in the description of the seventh pair oppose the idea of a hypothetical intermediary version. Constans, however, (II., p. cxxi) thinks his hypothesis of an abridged prose *Thebaid* is necessary to explain the details which the *Roman* gives in regard to the gates and their defenders. For a full discussion of the names and locations of the gates of Thebes, see Constans, *Légende*, pp. 69, 76, 275 f.

Mss. B. and C., redaction x in Constans' classification, are especially closely related to the *Thebaid*. Constans' explanatory hypothesis is that the author of x used Statius in rehandling the O. F. original. From the citations made above, it will be seen that there are in mss. A., P., and S. also unique errors arising immediately from the text of Statius. It seems just as logical to say that such details of all mss. were in the one O. F. original as to say that some of them (those of B. and C.) were added to that original by an erudite redacteur. The reader may judge whether, if Constans' hypothesis is to be accepted, such resemblances as *Culmina-Culmes* and *secui . . . ora* with *la teste colpe*, found in other mss. than B. and C., would not necessitate a second hypothesis of a second erudite redacteur.

The *Thèbes* begins with a free treatment of Laius, the oracle, Œdipus' exposure, the murder of his father, the marriage of his mother, discovery of his sin, his self-inflicted punishment. Then with the unnatural conduct of the sons in trampling on his eyes, the story falls in with Statius' account and follows it closely in its narrative features to line 2680. At this point is introduced the episode of Monflor (extending to 3465) which with the tedious episodes of Ravitaillement (7241-7642) and of Daire le Roux (7643-8600) may, as Constans suggests (II. cxx, n.), be credited to the invention of the author of the *Roman*. But with these exceptions practically all the valuable basic topics of the narrative are due to Statius and are presented in the main in the Statian order.

Some prominent details common to both narratives are these. The carbuncle on the tower at Argos (*Thèbes* 630) is explained by *Theb.* i. 380. Tydeus and Polynices are foretold as sons-in-law of Adrastus and mentioned in the prophecy as a lion and a wild boar (*Thèbes* 812; *Theb.* i. 484). The daughters of Adrastus are compared to Pallas and Diana for beauty (*Thèbes* 955; *Theb.* i. 535). In defending himself from the fifty, Tydeus takes a position on the cliff once inhabited by the Sphinx (*Thèbes* 1600; *Theb.* ii. 555). When he returns to Argos, he shouts out to Adrastus and the nobles: "Armez vos tost" (*Thèbes* 1819); "Arma, arma viri . . . Arma para!" (*Theb.* iii. 348). Amphiaraus foretells the outcome of the war and his own doom (*Thèbes* 2040; *Theb.* iii. 624). Hypsipyle guides the thirsting army to the Langia, tells the story of the Lemnian women, neglects Archemorus, who is bitten by a serpent (*Thèbes* 2090-2350; *Theb.* iv. 740 ff.). Jocasta and her daughters go to the Grecian camp to intercede in behalf of Polynices (*Thèbes* 3767; *Theb.* vii. 470). The tiger, an animal sacred to Bacchus, is the immediate cause of hostilities (*Thèbes* 4283; *Theb.* vii. 565). Though *Thèbes* mentions but one tiger here (Statius mentions two), still verbal resemblances prove that he had the *Thebaid* before him. Cf.:

*Thèbes.*

*Thebaid.*

	En la vile une tigre aveit, Soz ciel sa pér on ne saveit.	tigres (564).
4285	Oïr en poez grant merveille: Ele ne tocast une oelle,	quis credat? (572). ipsa has . . . amabant armenta (572).
	Car privee ert a desmesure: Tote esteit fors de sa nature.	mite iugum (565). oblitas sanguinis (569).
	Donissez lé o char o pain,	exceptant cibos (575).
4290	El le manjast en vostre main; De vin betist plein un grant cuèvre . . .	manus obvia pascit (574). fuso horrenda supinant ora mero (575).
	De la cité vers l'ost eissi.	erumpunt (581).
4305	Li escuier qui abevroent	aurigam . . . equos stagna ad vi- cinia trehebat (583).
	Et qui par le champ bohor doent	transiliunt campos (585).

Davant la vile l'ont ocise:	ad portas . . . extantia ducunt spicula semianimes (596).
Por sauvage l'ont entreprise.	sueta feras prosternere virtus (591).

In spite of such verbal resemblances in serial order, Constans (II. cxxii, n.) thinks the mention of one tiger instead of two is one of the modifications of Statius' version that can be explained only on the hypothesis of an abridged prose *Thebaid* standing between Statius and the *Thèbes*.

These are a few of the many details common to the *Thèbes* and the *Thebaid*; perhaps they will suffice. It may be added that the heroes are killed off in the same order as in the *Thebaid*. This is true in mss. B and C; but APS make Capeneus survive until Theseus' siege—a point which alone suggests that B and C should be taken as the basis in constituting the O. F. original; for the relation of the mss. to Statius is at least as important a criterion as tests of language.

Besides the narrative framework, the romantic and striking features of the *Thebaid* are likely to reappear in the *Thèbes*; as, Ismene's dream prophetic of the death of her lover Atys, fulfilled while she is relating it to her sister (*Thèbes* 6203; *Theb.* VIII. 630); and the extreme hatred of the brothers shown by their fighting even on the funeral pyre (*Thèbes* 10177; *Theb.* XII. 429). The only motif of the *Thèbes* that seriously suggests an original other than Statius, one possibly common to the *Thèbes* and the *Teseide*, is the statement, made in both these poems and inconsistent with Statius, that Thebes was burned. But this may well have entered both accounts independently and be due to a mediaeval confusion of the expedition of the Seven with that of the Epigones.

All manuscripts of the *Thèbes* contain features so close to the text of the *Thebaid* as to make it probable that the original of all mss. was dependent directly on Statius. Therefore the manuscripts (B and C) nearest to the *Thebaid* should be used as a basis in constituting the text of the French poem.



DID CHAUCER KNOW THE *Roman de Thèbes*?

Constans (II., p. clix) advances the opinion that Chaucer know the *Roman de Thèbes* or one of the French prose redactions of it. In support of his claim, he adduces the following evidence.

1. *Polymites* (*Troil.* v. 1488) and *Parthonolope* (v. 1503), corrupt forms of Polynices and Parthenopæus, were taken from one of the prose versions.

2. The mention of Thiodamas and Ioab as famous trumpeters (*H. F.* 1245 and *C. T.*, E. 1719) is made upon an authority which, whether it be Latin or French, can not be earlier than the Middle Ages. A French prose version is a probable source.

3. The romance of Thebes which was being read to Criseyde (*Troil.* II. 100) contained at its beginning the history of Œdipus as does the poetical *Roman*. Cf.:

“This romaunce is of Thebes, that we rede;  
And we han herd how that king Laius deyde  
Thurgh Edippus his sone, and al that dede.”

This evidence is faulty at several points.<sup>1</sup> 1. *Parthonopee*, or *Parthonope* is the best Chaucerian spelling, being especially well supported at *Troil.* v. 1503, where Skeat records no variant. It is also the spelling of the Harleian 7333 at *Anelida* 58, where, however, the variant form *Parthonolope* is found in mss. Fairfax and Bodley. If this latter spelling is Chaucer's own, he may have found it in a prose *Thèbes*; for the form *Parthonolopeus* occurs in the French prose *Edipus*, B. N. fr. 246 (D).<sup>1</sup> If, however, the better attested form *Parthonopee* is what Chaucer wrote in both passages referred to, he probably took his spelling from the Latin argument of the *Thebaid* quoted (after v. 1498,

<sup>1</sup> For an elaboration of these objections, see *Mod. Lang. Notes* XVII, 236-237).

<sup>1</sup> See Constans II., p. clix, n.



*Troilus*) from the Latin ms. which he used as his source. This Latin argument contains the forms *Parthonopeo* and *Poly-mitem*, which account for Chaucer's forms.

It is not improbable that Chaucer in the *House of Fame* was making use of lists which he found in a catalogue of persons famous for certain things. If he had no such source, it may well be that he himself was the first to join Joab and Thiodamas as famous trumpeters. It is nevertheless beyond doubt that he had in mind some authority who tells of an occasion upon which Thiodamas blew a trumpet at Thebes. No such occasion is mentioned in the poetical *Roman*, nor has Constans located it in the prose redactions.

3. In regard to *Troil.* II. 99 ff., it should be noted that Chaucer could have gathered from the *Thebaid* information sufficient to write these lines. Œdipus in his prayer to Tisiphone sketches his early history, referring to the murder of his father thus (I. 64): *trifidaque in Phocidos arto Longaevum implicui regem secuique trementis Ora senis, dum quaero patrem.* These lines together with other references which are found before the close of book VII, the point reached by the reader, would leave a clear impression of Œdipus' crime. Mercury, in obedience to the command of Jove, conducted Laius from the realm of the shades that he might induce Eteocles to usurp the kingdom (II. 7): *Pone senex trepida succedit Laius umbra Vulnere tardus adhuc; capulo nam largius illi Transabiit costas cognatis ictibus ensis Impius, et primas Furiarum pertulit iras; It tamen et medica firmat vestigia virga.* The god flew above scenes familiar to Laius; *ardua Cirrhae Pollutamque suo despectat Phocida busto . . . Ut vero et celsis suamet iuga nixa columnis Vidit et infectos etiamnum sanguine currus, Paene retro turbatus abit* (II. 63 ff.). After delivering the message to his grandson, *iugulum mox caede patentem Nudat et undanti perfudit vulnere somnum* (II. 123 f.). Again when Laius was summoned by Tiresias to reveal the outcome of the war, he angrily said (IV. 630): *Illum, illum sacris adhibete nefastis, Qui laeto fodit*

ense patrem. These are all backward references to a combat which took place before the time at which Statius' story begins; and it must be admitted, especially in view of other French touches in treating Theban material, that Chaucer's line may refer to a lively description of the combat itself. This is found in the story as told by the *Roman de Thèbes*; cf. l. 175 ff., and particularly:

"Danz Laius i fu ocis:  
La teste i ot le jor coupee,  
Et ne fu par autrui espee  
Que par l'espee de son fil" (202-05).

Hamilton (*Chaucer's Indebtedness to Guido*, p. 92, n. 2) states: "In the *Troilus*, as in the other poems, Chaucer shows an acquaintance with a late recension of the *Roman de Thèbes*." For similarity in language and sentiment with *Troil.* v. 1849 ff.:

"Lo here, of Payens corsed olde rytes,  
Lo here, what alle hir goddes may availle;  
Lo here, these wrecched worldes appetytes;  
Lo here, the fyn and guerdon for travaille  
Of Iove, Appollo, of Mars, of swich rascaille!"

He quotes *Thèbes*, 4337 ff. (MS. S):

"Ffors solement danz Jupiter,  
Qui tint un dart agu de fer.  
Mars fu dejuste lui a destre;  
La proz Pallas fu a senestre:  
Cil dui valent en bataille;  
Plus que toute l'autre rascaille."

The resemblance of phrase is striking, though the sentiment, according to Hamilton, shows influence of Guido. But additional proof of the view held by Constans and Hamilton is not wanting.

The best indication that Chaucer used the *Roman de Thèbes* is found in the *Knight's Tale*, in the introductory portion of which he seems to have tried to show what he could do in the way of combining sources. The *Thebaid*, *Teseide*, *Thèbes*, and *Knight's Tale* all deal with the same situation: King Creon

has refused to allow the burial of the Argive dead that lie around the walls of Thebes; and the Argive women, who wish to perform the last rights for their relatives, seek aid from Theseus.

According to that redaction (MSS. SPA) of the *Roman de Thèbes* used by Constans in constituting his text, there were but three survivors of all the thousands in the allied hosts that besieged Thebes, viz.: Adrastus, Capaneus, and the messenger who carried the sad news of defeat to Argos (9717). Upon receiving the message the Argive women resolve to go to Thebes to bury the bodies of their loved ones (9809). On their way thither they meet Adrastus and Capaneus returning from the battle. These two heroes turn back towards Thebes with the women (9891). While on their way, they see Theseus at the head of his army marching to crush a rebellious feudal lord (9905); and Adrastus runs to entreat him to champion the cause of the women against old Creon, king of Thebes (9937).

Professor Skeat in his *Glossary* says *caitifs* (A. 924) means *captives*. In what way the women are captives does not appear in any of the accounts. But *caitifs* is appropriate if it be taken as a predicate adjective meaning *wretched*; for it then refers to their grief and squalor in contrast to their former regal splendor. This adjective may have been taken from the *Thèbes* (9980), where *chaitives* is said of the suppliant women. Cf. "wrecched women" (A. 950).

A. 938: The olde Creon; cf. *Anelida* 64. This adjective which Chaucer considers appropriate to Creon, is in the *Thèbes* applied to him with the persistency of an epic epithet. Cf. *Thèbes*, 5190: Creon li vieuz; also 5799, 8341, 10008, 10076 C., 10664 A., 11091 S.

A. 939: Of Thebes the citee; cf. *Thèbes*, 9958: de Thebes la cite. However, this resemblance is significant only in connection with others where dependence is surer; for the line ends in a manner quite Chaucerian. Cf. B. 289, B. 3337, also *Legend*, 2404.

(Creon) "Hath alle the bodyes on an heep y-drawe,  
And wol nat suffren hem, by noon assent,

Neither to been y-buried nor y-brent" (944-46).

Cf. "Creon leur vée sepou(l)ture;  
Les gentilz hommes preuz et biax  
Fèt manger a chiens, a oisia(u)x" (C. 10096-98).

Cf. S. 11079 ff. *Tes.* II. 31: Sentendoli mangiare agli animali.

- "And with that word, withouten more respyt,  
*They fillen gruf, and cryden pitously,*  
950 '*Have on us wrecched wommen som mercy,*  
*And lat our sorwe sinken in thyn herte.'*  
*This gentil duk doun from his courser sterte*  
*With herte pitous, whan he herde hem speke.*  
*Him thoughte that his herte wolde breke,*  
955 *Whan he saugh hem so pitous and so mat,*  
*That whylom weren of so greet estat.*  
*And in his armes he hem alle up hente,*  
*And hem conforteth in ful good entente;*  
*And swoor his ooth, as he was trewe knight,*  
960 *He wolde doon so ferforthly his might*  
*Up-on the tyraunt Creon hem to wreke, . . .*
- 9935 *Li dus chevauche fierement*  
*Et bien conduit s'ost et sa gent:*  
*Reis Adrastus, quant s'aproisma,*  
*Reconut lui, vers lui ala.*  
*Tost deguerpi sa compaignie;*  
9940 *Al duc en vait, merci li crie.*  
*Come il fu près, si descendié,*  
*Et vint corant vers lui a pié;*  
*Vers le duc cort isnèlement,*  
*A ses piez chiet mout humilment.*  
9945 *Quant a ses piez le vit li dus,*  
*De son cheval descendié jus:*  
*Merveilla sei que il aveit,*  
*Por ço que il nel conoisseit.*  
*Reis Adrastus geseit a terre,*  
9950 *Le duc teneit por merci querre;*  
*Merci li criot humilment,*  
*Et si plorot mout tendrement:*  
*'Sire,' fait il, 'por Deu merci! . . .*  
*Gardez la sus en son cel mont,*  
*Femnes i a que grant duel font:*  
*Dolentes sont et esguarees,*  
9980 *Chaitives et maleürees,*  
*Por lor amis, qui mort i sont;*  
*A grant esforz a Thèbes vont,*



- Por eus veoir et enterrer  
 Et sevelir et conreer,  
 9985 Que ne les manjucent oisel,  
 Chien ne leon, leu ne corbel.  
 Cil de Thèbes ne lor lairont:  
 Bien sai que il lor defendront.  
 Por ço requier vostre bonté  
 9990 Et vostre grant nobileté:  
 Rendez as dames lor amis,  
 Que cil de Thèbes ont ocis;  
*Vengiez les de lor enemis,*  
*Merci aiez de nos chaitis.'*  
 9995 *Ligentiz dus tot escota,*  
*En son cuer grant pitié en a:*  
*Par la main prist rei Adrastus,*  
*De la terre le leva sus:*  
 'Sire reis,' fait il, 'sus levez:  
 10000 Tot vos otrei quant que querez:  
 Se non vos rendent voz ocis,  
*A grant eissil en serront mis.'*"

In the passage quoted above, compare especially:

<i>Knight's Tale</i>	949	with	<i>Thèbes</i>	9945
"	"	950	"	9994
"	"	952	"	9946 and 9995 f.
"	"	957	"	9997 f.

Note also the exact progression in order of the corresponding lines and that the end of the entreaty of the Grecian matrons, *K. T.* 950 f., is practically a translation of Adrastus' appeal in their behalf, *Thèbes* 9993 f. In mss. B. and C. Argia and Deiphyle make their petition directly to Theseus, who dismounts and lifts them from their suppliant position (10015 C.). In Chaucer's account the suppliants fall prostrate on the roadside when they make their plea; and the duke dismounts that he may raise them to their feet. These particulars are in the *Thèbes*; but not in the *Thebaid*, nor in the *Teseide*, the only other possible sources. They are just such details as Chaucer would be likely to turn to account in his effort to give us the picture of an ideal mediaeval knight.

Especially noteworthy is the fact that, in the story as told

by Statius and Boccaccio, Theseus rides in a triumphal chariot whereas in the *Thèbes* and in Chaucer he rides horseback:—

A. 904: "Til they the reynes of his brydel henten."

952: "This gentil duk down from his courser sterte."

Cf. *Thèbes* 9946: De son cheval descendié jus. *Theb.* XII. 520 laurigero . . . curru (cf. 543). *Tes.* II. 22: Teseo adunque come fu smontato Di mare in terra, in sul carro salio (cf. II. 24).

For Italian parallels to *K. T.* 954-56 and 958-61, which are due to the *Teseide* rather than to the *Thèbes*, see p. 84.

There is nothing in the *Thebaid* or the *Teseide* corresponding to A. 987 f.:

"And by assaut he wan the citee after,

And rente adoun bothe wal, and sparre, and rafter."

In the *Thebaid* hostilities ended with the slaying of Creon; and the inhabitants, freed from the tyrant, invited Theseus to enter the city (XII. 782 ff.). In the *Teseide* the old men, women, and children left the city and followed the scattered and fleeing Theban army through the surrounding mountains so that Theseus found no one to oppose his entrance to the city (II. 71-73). In the *Thèbes*, however, the city was won by assault: the walls and towers were thrown down, the city set on fire, and the men made prisoners (10073 ff.):

"*Li dus assaut mout vassament*

*La cité o tote sa gent;*

10075 *Il meismes o un mouton*

*Les murs quassot tot environ:*

*Donc veissez femnes ramper,*

*O mauz d'acier les murs fausser;<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup>MS. C. 10460 reads: A maus d'acier, a pis agus, with which should be compared a passage in which Lydgate may be referring directly to the poetical *Roman* (*Story of Thebes*, I., p. 605, Chalmers' *Eng. Poets*):

"Yet as some authors make mentioun,

Or Theseus entred into the toun,

The women first with pekois and with malles,

With great labour beat downe the walles,

- Le mortier gratent trop fortement,  
 10080 Pertus i firent plus du cent. . .  
 10117 Les dames sont de l'autre part,  
 De ceus dedenz n'ont nul reguart:  
 Tant ont bechié et tant graté  
 10120 *Que le fort mur ont esfondré;*  
*Devers eles ont fait pertus,*  
*Pleine perche escraventé jus.*  
 Sor la tor uns arbalestiers  
 S'en aperçut trestoz premiers,  
 Si comença fort a huchier  
 Que mout sont près de l'aprochier:  
 'Veez les murs escraventer  
 Et ceus defors dedenz entrer!'  
 Li gentiz dus, quant l'entendîé,  
 10130 Dreit al pertus a fort tendîé;  
 'Le fou! le fou!' a crier prist,  
*En la cite par tot le mist:*<sup>1</sup>  
 Qui donc veïst les tors crever  
 Et les hanz murs escraventer,  
 10135 Grant dolor en poïst avoir  
*Des granz tors que veïst chaeir,*  
 Li dus trestote l'eissilla,  
*Les murs et les tors craventa;*  
 Les homes fist emprisoner."

In the *Thèbes* all this destruction takes place before the death of Creon, after his death in the *Knight's Tale*. The great probability that Chaucer found in some source the statement that Theseus "rente adoun" the wall should be stressed. While Chaucer freely orders the material of his source and omits at will, he does not as a rule invent important details which he professes to find in a source, least of all does he do

And in hir writing, also as they saine,  
 Campaneus was in the wals slaine,  
 With cast of stones he was so ouerlade."

<sup>1</sup> Cf. MS. 6. 10479:

"Le fu fèt apoter li dus  
 Et tout esprendre sus et jus.  
 La ville fu mout tost esprise:  
 N'i remést onc autél n'eglise,  
 Tour ne palès en nuleguise,  
 Que tout ne fus arz sanz devise."

so in a tale of such historical dignity as the *Knight's Tale*. He later consistently reports the walls as *waste* (A. 1331). Cf. A. 1880: *olde walles wyde*.

The destruction of the city by fire, mentioned in the passage quoted above (10131 f.), cannot be taken as evidence that Chaucer knew the *Thèbes*; for he may have taken his statement that "the town was brent" (*Troil.* v. 1510) from Boccaccio (*Tes.* II. 81). There is no mention of the burning of the city in the *Knight's Tale*.

"And to the ladyes he restored agayn  
The bones of hir housbondes that were slayn,  
To doon obsequies, as was tho the gyse (A. 991-93).  
*As dames fist rendre les cors,*  
*Qui porrisseient la defors:*  
Les dames les ont mout plorez  
Et mout doucement regretez" (10149-52).

The resemblance, though close, may not be significant.

At line 1005 ends that portion of the *K. T.* which overlaps the story of the *Thebaid* and the *Thèbes*; and any further mention of matter from either poem must be wrought in incidentally from that earlier portion of those narratives which precede the appeal to Theseus. In other words the *Teseide* and the *Knight's Tale* are continuations of the story of the *Thebaid* and the *Thèbes*. Accordingly we need not be surprised to find beyond this point in the *K. T.* but few more phrases which look as if they were suggested by the *Thèbes*.

"Of Cadmus, which that was the firste man  
That Thebes bulte, or first the toun bigan,  
And of the citee first was crowned king" (*K. T.* 1547 ff.).

"Kamus, qui fu fiex Agenor  
Et de Tébes fu premiers rois" (*Thèbes*, 6312 f. A.).  
"Que Cadmus li preus i ferma,  
Qui ceste cité commencha (2113 f. A.).  
Si com Cadmus, qui fist la vile (9125 C.).

Ther saugh I Attheon an hert y-naked  
For vengeaunce that he saugh Diane *al naked* (2065 f.).



. . . Dont Acteon fu engendrez  
 Qui après fu en cerf muez  
 Por la deesse qu'ot veüe  
 En la fontaine toute nue" (C. 9126 ff.).

Cf. *Tes.* VII. 79: Atteon . . . si mutò in cervo. Cf. also *K. T.* 2303.

The claim that Chaucer knew that version of the Theban legend best represented by the *Roman de Thèbes* is well supported by these prominent features which are common to the *K. T.* and to the *Thèbes*, but have no basis whatever in Statius or Boccaccio: Theseus was riding on horseback when the suppliants begged his aid; he won Thebes by assault; he destroyed its walls and dwellings. The other resemblances pointed out furnish cumulative evidence. Emphasis should be laid on the fact that in the *Teseide* as in the *Thebaid*, Theseus is the typical classical conqueror making a triumphal entry, whereas in the *K. T.* he is a mediaeval knight whose chivalry manifests itself in the same way as in the *Thèbes*.

The *Anelida* and the *Troilus* are the other two poems that furnish hints of an acquaintance with the *Roman de Thèbes*. If Chaucer had a source for the modern portion of the *Anelida* (i. e., l. 71 ff.), it must have been a late mediaeval one. The residence of a queen of Arminia at Thebes, while wholly out of rapport with the classical tradition, would be just the sort of thing one would expect in a French version belonging to the *Roman de Thèbes* family. Cf. *Thèbes* 3872, where we are told that the son of Hergart, king of *Ermine*, was living at Thebes.

"So desolat stood Thebes and so bare,  
 That no wight coude remedie of his care (*Anel.* 62 f.).  
 Que deserte en fu la contree  
 Et eissilliee et deguastee" (10221 f.).

The gloss *fure d'enfer*, found on the margin of ms. Harl. 2392 at *Troil.* I. 6, may be Chaucer's own and may have been taken from *Thèbes* 510, *Tesiphone*, *fure d'enfer*.

In his description of the *Thebaid*, Chaucer may have applied to it the title of the O. F. poem:

"This romaunce is of Thebes, that we rede" (*Troil.* II. 100).

Cf. *Ci commence li roumans de Thèbes*, in the rubric of MS. B., also *Explicit le Roumanz de Thebes* at the end of MS. C. See Constans, II., p. x.

"How the bisshop, as the book can telle,  
Amphiorax, fil thurgh the ground to helle" (*Troil.* II. 104 f.).

Amphiaras is called arcevesques, *Thèbes* 4791; cf. vesque 5051 and 5079; vesques 5063; evesque 5053. This touch is almost certainly due to the Old French as is Chaucer's spelling of the proper name. Cf. *Troil.* v. 1500, *Anel.* 57, *C. T. D.* 741, also *Amphiarax*, *Thèbes* 4779 S., 4815 S., 4860 S. The Italian form of the name is Anfiarao, *Tes.* II. 11. Cf. *En enfer chiet Amphiaras* (4475 S.).

Chaucer's form Stace is nearer to the O. F. Estace than to the Italian Stazio. Cf. Estasse, *Thèbes* 19 P, *Estace* 2737 BC., *Anel.* 21, *H. F.* 1460, *Troil.* v. 1792, Boccaccio, *Am. Vis.* 5.

### III. THE ACHILLEIS.

There is no reason why Chaucer should not have known the *Achilleis*, since it was read and admired in the Middle Ages (Teuffel-Schwabe, *Hist. Rom. Lit.* 321.6). He refers to it in the *House of Fame*, where he names the works that in his estimation give Statius a right to fame (1460):

"The Tholosan that highte Stace,  
That bar of Thebes up the fame  
Upon his shuldres, and the name  
Also of cruel Achilles."

But I have been unable to find an indication that Chaucer took anything from it. Lounsbury suggests (*Studies in Chaucer*, II. 252) that the enrolling of Chiron among the famous

harpers may possibly be credited to this source. Cf. *H. F.* 1201 ff. with *Achil.* I. 105-18; also I. 185, 572, II. 156.

“Ther herde I pleyen on an harpe  
That souned bothe wel and sharpe,  
Orpheus ful craftely,  
And on his syde faste by,  
Sat the harper Orion,  
And *Eacides Chiron*,  
And other harpers many oon.”

But Skeat rightly observes that *Eacides Chiron* is copied from Ovid, *A. A.* I. 17 *Æacidæ Chiron*. It may be added that he probably took the epithet *cruel* (1463) from the same source, where *saevus* is said of both Achilles and Amor (18).

The fact that Gower uses the *Achilleis* makes it probable that his friend Chaucer was likewise acquainted with it. The story of Achilles at the court of Lycomedes is told by Gower (*C. A.* v. 2691-3201) in such a way as to leave little doubt that his source was the *Achilleis*. The strenuous training which Chiron gave his foster-son is described by Gower (*C. A.* iv. 1968 ff.). Here, too, he is probably dependent on the *Achilleis* (II. 121 ff.). See Macaulay's note.

“It is wel wist how that the Grekes stronge  
In armes with a thousand shippes wente  
To Troyewardes, and the citee longe  
Assegeden neigh ten year er they stente” (*Troil.* I. 58-61).

The *Filostrato* does not mention the voyage of the Greeks towards Troy; but opens with the siege in progress (cf. I. 7). Thetis in her presentiments of the war to arise from the abduction of Helen, saw the Ionian and the Aegean plowed by a thousand ships (*Achil.* I. 34): Video iam mille carinis Ionium Aegaeumque premi. Bell says Chaucer probably obtained the number of the Grecian ships from Vergil (*Aen.* II. 198): Non anni domuere decem, non mille carinae. That Vergil, not Statius, is the source of this definite number of ships, is probable because Chaucer mentions *neigh ten year* as the period of the siege.

#### IV. THE SILVAE.

The *Silvae* may be discussed briefly since there is no indication that Chaucer knew of the existence of this book. He fails to mention it when he gives his reasons for placing the statue of Statius in the House of Fame. In fact, this mention of Statius' work was influenced by Dante, for Chaucer copies from him the adjective *Tholosan*, *H. F.* 1460:

"The *Tholosan* that highte Stace,  
That bar of Thebes up the fame  
Upon his shuldres, and the name  
Also of cruel Achilles.

Tanto fu dolce mio vocale spirto,  
Che, *Tolosano*, a se me trasse Roma,  
Dove mertai le tempie ornar di mirto.  
Stazio la gente ancor di la mi noma:  
*Cantai di Tebe e poi del grande Achille.*  
Ma caddi in via con la seconda soma" (*Purg.* XXI. 88).

See Skeat's note and Constans (II. p. cliv, clviii).

The erroneous opinion that Statius was a native of Toulouse was prevalent in the Middle Ages (Constans, *Legende*, pp. 149-55); and probably arose from confounding the poet, who was a Neapolitan, with the rhetorician Statius of Toulouse. Had the *Silvae* been read in the Middle Ages, Statius' own testimony would have corrected the error; for he refers to Naples as his native town, calling it by its poetical name *Parthenope* (*Silv.* III. 5, 79): *Nostra quoque et propriis tenuis nec rara colonia Parthenope*, cui mite solum trans aequora vectae Ipse Dionaea monstravit Apollo columba. Vollmer compares Suetonius (fr. 203 Reiff.): *Parthenopen Sirenem sepultam in Campaniae litore, a cuius nomine Neapolis Parthenope vocitata aestimatur.* Apropos in this connection are some lines found in *Anthol. Lat.* II. 233 (Burm.) which decide between the claims of the rival cities:—



“Qui primo cecinit Thebas, mox casus Achillem  
 Occidit, hac colitur Statius in statua.  
*Hunc genuit tali gavis Neapolis ortu,*  
*Ipsa Tholosa licet blateret esse suum.*  
 Quod si vana suum contendat Gallia vatem,  
 Silvarum relegas, candide lector, opus.  
 Haec etiam genuit Stellam paritura poetam,  
 Ne sit in hoc uno splendida Parthenope.”

The words referred to are those of Statius to Stella (*Silv.* i, 2, 260): At te nascentem gremio mea prima recepit Parthenope.

If our present knowledge of the textual tradition of the *Silvae* be correct, it is historically impossible that Chaucer could have known this work of Statius. Scholars at the court of Charlemagne at the beginning of the 9th century were familiar with it (Engelmann's Diss., p. 17; and Vollmer's Edit., p. 34); but we do not hear of the *Silvae* again until 1416, when Poggio discovered a codex near Constance in Italy (Engelmann, Diss., p. 14; Clark, *Classical Rev.* xiii. 121 ff.). However, it must here be noted that, although Chaucer died sixteen years before Poggio's find, he seems to have known the title *Argonauticon* of Valerius Flaccus, the first three books and a part of the fourth of which were found at the same time; for in the *Legend of Good Women* (1456 f.), he refers his readers to the *Argonauticon* for a list of those who went with Jason:—

“But who so axeth who is with him gon,  
 Lat him go reden *Argonauticon*.”

The list of the Argonauts is found *Val. Fl.* i. 350-484. Skeat, following Bech, says Chaucer here copies Dares (*De excidio Troiae historia*, cap. i.) Demonstrare eos qui cum Iasone perfecti sunt non videtur nostrum esse: sed qui volunt eos cognoscere, Argonautas legant. At the same time, Chaucer must have had additional knowledge about the title used by Valerius Flaccus. If he had been dependent upon Dares alone, he would have written *Argonautas* or *Argonautae*.

## CONCLUSION.

With the exception of Ovid, and possibly of Boethius, Statius was Chaucer's most familiar Latin author. The nature and extent of his borrowings from the *Thebaid* show an intimate acquaintance extending over almost the entire period of his literary activity. The *Compleynt unto Pite*, probably his earliest original work, owes (if Skeat be correct) its basal idea to Statius; and the *Knight's Tale* furnishes abundant evidence to show that the *Thebaid* had not ceased to attract the author who drew from it his youthful inspiration.

Those works of Chaucer which contain direct borrowings from the *Thebaid* are: *Troilus* (books I-V.), *House of Fame*, *Legend of Good Women*, *Compleynt unto Pite*, *Book of the Duchesse*, *Compleynt of Mars*, *Anelida*, *Knight's Tale*, *Wife of Bath's Prologue* (?), *Merchant's Tale*. Of these, the *Troilus* shows the most extensive influence.

Mediate influence of the *Thebaid* comes to Chaucer through the *Filostrato* and the *Teseide* of Boccaccio and probably through the anonymous *Roman de Thèbes*. The indirect influence through the *Filostrato* is confined to the *Troilus*, but that through the *Teseide* is very extensive, being seen in *Troilus* (books II. and V.), *Legend of Good Women*, *Parlement of Foules*, *Anelida*, and especially in the *Knight's Tale*. Influence through the *Roman de Thèbes* is seen in the *Knight's Tale* and perhaps in the *Anelida* and the *Troilus*.

In regard to the relation to Statius of the Old French and Italian intermediaries, it is believed that the author of the *Roman de Thèbes*, whatever other sources he may have had, made direct use of the *Thebaid*; and it is known that Boccaccio used the *Thebaid* as his principal source for the *Teseide*, closely adapting and even translating many passages.

It was Chaucer's way to consult all available sources and to make up the most authentic story consistent with his artistic

purpose. For example, while using Boccaccio, he kept the text of Statius at his side, and used it as a commentary upon and supplement to the *Teseide*. The result in the *Knight's Tale* is a story richer in detail and clearer in idea than he could otherwise have written. Chaucer's sanity of judgment would have been a sufficient guide in abridging the long-drawn and often tedious quasi-epic of Boccaccio; but it is at the suggestion of Statius that he dismisses the first book of the *Teseide* in a few lines and begins the *Knight's Tale* with Theseus' return to Athens. Conspicuous examples of his method are three descriptive portions of the *Knight's Tale* (A. 859-996, 1967-2050, 2863-2962) where Chaucer skilfully combined sources, going to the ultimate source for additional details. Boccaccio, in the corresponding portions of the *Teseide*, follows the *Thebaid* very closely; consequently Statius' descriptions appear but little changed in Chaucer's version.

The *Achilleis*, though in all probability known to Chaucer, was not used by him. The *Silvae* was unknown to him, not yet having been rescued from the oblivion into which it fell in the 9th century.

The following emendations of the text of the *Canterbury Tales* are suggested. Read *breking* for *breketh* (A. 1642), *aspes* for *waspes* (B. 1749).

The *Cantus Troili* (*Troil.* I. 400-420) is not referred to Lollius. Thus Lollius is consistently Boccaccio.

Though authors in the Middle Ages frequently quoted from a source and referred, not to it, but to the most remote author known to have written about that subject, Chaucer's reference to Corinne (*Anel.* 21) is probably not an instance of the practice. Chaucer gives his references to sources in good faith.

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## LIFE.

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I was born at Stephens City, Virginia, July 7th, 1874. After two years of preparatory study at Randolph-Macon Academy, Front Royal, Va., I entered Randolph-Macon College at Ashland, Va., in 1894, whence I graduated with the degree of A. B. in 1897 and of A. M. in 1898. I then returned to Randolph-Macon Academy as Instructor in Latin and served in that capacity for three years.

In October, 1901, I was admitted as a graduate student in the Johns Hopkins University, where I have since then been pursuing courses in Latin, English, and German under the instruction of Professors Kirby Flower Smith, James W. Bright, Henry Wood, and Harry Langford Wilson. To these my instructors, I am greatly indebted, and above others to Professor Smith, who has been to me an inspiring teacher as well as an example of scholarly method.

During the first two years of my attendance at this university, I was one of the Virginia Scholars; and during the last two years, I have been Fellow in the Department of Latin.

BOYD ASHBY WISE.

BALTIMORE, May 1, 1905.













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